First-Line Management: The Critical Link Between Goal Perception and Performance

A Multicultural Study Of Canadian And Japanese First-Line Managers

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ABSTRACT

The need to be and stay competitive has corporations reassessing their organisation and management processes. Productivity, performance management and motivation include goals as one of their basic building blocks. These concepts, when operationalised, highlight the role and effectiveness of first-line managers, who directly control the majority of human resources. Changes in organisational design such as leaner and flatter management structure, combined with employee empowerment, further underscore the pivotal role of first-line managers. They represent a key link in the management chain. Yet, it is evident that the focus or nature of goals, specifically at the first-line management level, is left largely untouched in the literature.

Many disciplines explore the topic of goals. The number of variables that affect the outcome explodes as each field conveys its own perspective. Existing research either investigates goals in a controlled environment, anecdotal by relating corporate practices or case studies of a general nature, or posits a paradigm from the perspective of the author's discipline. Some research addresses the features of goals whilst others concentrate on the factors affecting outcome. This situation has raised the question as to the nature and focus of goals: the 'end' or the 'means'? It is acknowledged that there is a lack of research dealing with the 'actual' focus of goals. The objective of this thesis is to fill this gap in the literature with respect to the first-line manager's perception of goals.

This study aims to ascertain the nature of goals as perceived by first-line managers. A survey conducted in Canada and Japan contrasts first-line managers' responses as well as provides a valuable insight on the effect that different management practices have on the nature of goals. It is evident that much has been written about Japanese practices at the

corporate level as a whole, but little information is available on individual performance orientation, particularly at the first-line management level. The data collected in this research furnishes a deeper insight on goals and some factors that affect performance, as perceived by first-line managers.

Goals can take a variety of forms and focus. As such, it was deemed imperative not to bias responses by producing pre-selected categories but to employ open-ended questions. The use of phenomenological mapping is not intended to test a particular hypothesis but aims to understand the situation by allowing the data to speak for itself. The results supply a first-hand understanding as to the actual focus of first-line managers, unadulterated by theories and speculations.

A number of findings have evolved. The choice between 'end' or 'means' goals is related to basic management philosophies which are characteristic of the two populations. The general conclusion is that the values of the organisation are reflected in the type of goals being pursued. The same values are also reflected in the training received – or absence of it – and, eventually, are evident in the nature of goals being set. This duality of perspective is also found in the literature. On one hand, goal or outcome-oriented employees willing to make tough decisions are key managerial characteristics to be displayed by individuals who want to progress within the organisation. On the other hand, many preach the basic philosophy that employees are a key resource which should be developed to achieve better results. These two concepts are expounded independently of each other in the literature. The general field of research does not provide any criteria to measure the superiority of one system over the other; their mutual exclusivity is

usually implied. It suffices to say that output goals are necessary under both systems but not sufficient to assure adequate attention to the human side of the equation.

The research does widen the existing literature in a number of areas. Firstly, it illustrates how corporate managerial practices and values influence the outlook of first-line managers; while such a phenomenon has been postulated in the past, the results of the survey demonstrate it categorically. Secondly, it demonstrates how two viable perspectives of goals, the 'end' or the 'means', are as present in the academic thinking as they are in the work environment. Thirdly, the goal perspective of first-line managers, indicates that a different focus may be necessary to be commensurate with their respective roles and responsibilities as compared to the rest of the organisation.

The apparent dichotomy in the literature, between 'end' goals and 'means' goals, is also found between the responses of the two populations. The results clearly show that there is a need to rethink corporate practices in the area of human development, especially at the first-line management level. In addition to providing insights on goals, adequacy and recognition, this research implicitly raises the issue of the role which corporations should play in moulding human behaviour, and more specifically that of first-line managers. Conversely, there is the question of the degree to which individuality and personal responsibility for skill development should be left to the individual to decide. Better understanding of the nature of goals in the mind of first-line managers should enable organisations to effectively address the practice of goal setting and the management process entailed.

There are some limitations within the research. The qualitative nature of the research,

due to the use of open-ended questions, requires interpretative analysis of responses. The choice of categories, while free-flowing from the data, could also be considered as subjective. However, external audit of the tabulation, through the independent evaluation performed by an interrater, proved the process to be consistent. Through triangulation between existing published practices, plant visits and interviews as well as the internal consistency between the responses to different questions, the results of the tabulation exhibit congruity.

The thesis comprises fifteen chapters, organised into four major sections. Part I contains the theoretical content of the research. It provides the backdrop for the importance of goals and the relationship with productivity, the different paradigms being put forth, a detailed discussion on the nature of goals and the key role of first-line managers. Part II describes the design of the survey and the analytical procedures employed. Part III presents the actual tabulation of the data with observations related to the results. Part IV analyses and discusses the major findings in context with the theories expounded and, as well, provides conclusions and recommendations for future research.

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The personal computer is a great instrument, and some individuals are more talented than others in its use. Special gratitude to Mrs. Darlene Hahn who, with a great deal of patience and skill, made the production of this manuscript possible.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF APPENDICES

GLOSSARY OF ABBREVIATIONS

APO	Asian Productivity Organisation
E-R-G Model	Existence, Relatedness, Growth Model
ERP	Enterprise Resource Planning
GHP	Gross National Product
HR	Human Resources
HRD	Human Resources Development
ISO	International Organisation for Standardisation
JETRO	Japan External Trade Organisation
JI	Job Instructions
JIN	Japan Information Network
JIT	Just-In-Time
JMT	Job Methods Training
JR	Job Relations
MBO	Management By Objective
MITI	Ministry of Subnational Trade and Industry
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
Off JT	Off the Job Training
OJT	On-The-Job Training
R&D	Research and Development
SMEs	Small and Medium Size Enterprises
TPM	Total Productivity Model
TPmgt	Total Productivity Management
TQM	Total Quality Management
TWI	Training Within Industry
WAPS	World Academy for Productivity Science

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

I grow daily to honour facts more and more, and theory less and less.
Carlyle

1.0 PREAMBLE

In today's world of dissolving trade barriers and the formation of economic blocks, resulting in ease of communications and trade, the need for a rapid rate of change and the pressure for a short response time seems more urgent. Therefore, the new competitive environment requires the best of performance (A.T. Kearney, 2000; JIN, 2001). As stated by Sir Brian Pitman (Merrell, 1999), "In the future, there will be only two types of management - the quick and the dead". Continuous efforts to improve and adapt are key to long-term survival. Productivity gains will continue to be an ongoing concern both at the national and corporate levels.

Productivity, in a worldwide competitive environment, is a fundamental issue for industrialised countries. Such a competitive pressure is reflected in a recent headline of the *Financial Times*: *Producers see largest price fall for 40 years* as Britain's Industry Secretary comments that the figures are a warning that the problems in manufacturing are likely to intensify (Adams & Wighton, 1998). Countries such as China, even with low labour costs, are not impervious to the global competitive environment. "From a long-term point of view, the increased pressure to 'reform or die' will force Chinese firms to accelerate their moves to increase efficiency and competitiveness" (Wei, 1999). Moreover, the issue of productivity is raised in relation to the automotive industry; "If China joins the World Trade Organisation, it will have to make painstaking efforts to

improve the competitiveness of its automotive industry" (Bin, 1999). No organisation is immune to this global phenomenon.

The global competitiveness extends beyond the limits of corporations into geographical areas. McClenahen (1998) relates how world-class communities compete with other communities in Canada, Mexico, and Europe. He believes that a world-class manufacturing metropolitan area, whether in the U.S.A. or elsewhere in the world, is a place distinguished by its productivity and competitiveness. Productivity improvements will be focused upon and will be under continual scrutiny, from the very bowels of organisations to the national level, in developed as well as in rising economies.

In studying the ability of organisations to compete, two key factors emerge: goals and implementation (Pfeffer & Veiga, 1999; McKinsey, 1999; Beer, 2001). With regard to the former, goals can take various forms or can be the resultant outcome of various processes. Techniques such as benchmarking, best practice or MBOs (Management by Objectives) have, as their fundamental element, the setting of goals for the purpose of achieving higher performance. While goals have been researched in controlled environments, very little material is available on the actual nature or focus of goals by individuals. Such lack of insight has been widely acknowledged (Matthews & Mitchell, 1994; Hales, 1999; Knight *et al*, 2001; Siders *et al*, 2001). With regard to the latter, first-line managers play a crucial role in goal implementation due to their interface with direct reports (Daniels & Burns, 1997; Savolainen, 2000). Little has been found to focus on goal definitions at different levels of the organisation, specifically to the first-line managers. Nash (1990) decries the short-term, profit orientation of goals whilst Andrews (1994) acknowledges that the determination of purpose is most important, and

yet, most neglected of all human activities. Therefore, it is intended to elucidate the goal perspective of individuals at this particular level of management.

The following seven sections provide an overview, starting with a critique of the relevant literature, proceeding to provide the rationale for this research. The aim and objectives are then discussed, followed by the contribution to the existing body of knowledge. Based upon a brief outline of the research methodology, the scope and limitations of the study are provided. Finally, the structure of the report is presented.

1.1 CRITIQUE OF THE LITERATURE

Much has been written about the link between productivity and performance, with techniques arguably leading to utopia. The critique of the literature can be grouped into two broad areas. The first relates to the broad usage of the terms. The second pertains to the limitations of the various research constructs. The importance of productivity is such that the available literature crosses many fields ranging from Economics to Organisational Behaviour. It has been credited as being a major influence on the standard of living of a country (Porter, 1999) and in organisational survival (Merrell, 1999). While it is generally agreed that productivity is the ratio of output yielded to inputs spent (Mahoney, 1990; Schemerhorn, 1996; Sumanth, 1998), the operational application of the term 'productivity' varies greatly. The term is being used contiguously with performance and goals, in the context of a metric (Neely, 1998), a process (Kopelman, 1986), a value system or management philosophy (Davis, 1989) or an integrative approach as proposed by Sumanth (1998). Goals seem to be defined in the eyes of the beholder. It seems that goals are considered as a 'tool of the trade' in order to

accomplish a specific purpose where goals would lead to performance, and performance to improvements in productivity.

In addition to the wide application of the terms, a number of criticisms can be found in the literature relating to methodology, which can be categorised into five groupings.

a) Disconnect between research literature and actual practice;

b) Failure to measure what needs to be measured;

c) Appearance of confounding factors contributing to the muddled situation;

d) Over-simplification of the real issues;

e) Usage of appropriate metrics.

These are discussed fully in the following sections and constitute major considerations in the choice and development of the survey instrument of this research.

1.1.1 Disconnect Between Research and Practice

This gap between research and practice is a reality in numerous fields, not least the area of first-line management and goals. The lack of implementation of findings in the market place is deplored. This perception exists in the social sciences (Boland *et al*, 2001), humanities (Easton, 1991), psychology (McGuire, 1983; Fowler, 1990; Peterson, 1991; Hoshmand & Polkinghorne, 1992), education (Hallinan, 1996; Johnson *et al*, 1997) as well as in the management disciplines (Myers *et al*, 1980; Beyer, 1982; Porter & McKibbon, 1988; Cheit, 1991; Hambrick, 1994). This is not limited to academia, but is very much a reality for practitioners, as demonstrated by the lack of success in emulating the Toyota System (Pfeffer & Sutton, 1999).

It is not for the lack of publications that the message does not seem to get across. A plethora of business books are published each year. Pfeffer & Veiga (1999) reports that, in 1996, this is upwards of one thousand seven hundred in the United States, and upwards of $60 billion spent on training by organisations. They ask why there is such a divide between training, management consultation and organisational research, and so few changes in actual management practice. "If the evidence suggests that many successful interventions rely more on implementation of simple knowledge than on creating new insights, then our position that the gap between knowing and doing is important for firm performance follows logically. Transforming knowledge into organisational action is at least as important to organisational success" (Pfeffer & Sutton, 1999). The difficulty in the transfer of successful experiences is an indication that a lacuna somewhere in the process is affecting the outcome.

1.1.2 Failure to Measure What Needs to Be Measured

One of the difficulties is the whole issue of measurement. The nature of the problem is twofold. Firstly, some choices of variables may be driven by the ready-made availability of certain information (House, 1996). The use of exclusively financial performance measures is now widely recognized as conflicting with the most fundamental aims of modern business (Daniels & Burns, 1997). They acknowledge the need to shift away from prescriptive and highly formalised management accounting systems towards a more balanced approach, which also takes account of internal and external forces through the application of non-financial, as well as financial measures. The effort to design measures and the collection of the same represent a monumental task for both researchers and the respective organisations which might be involved in the project.

Secondly, there may be a bias that might be introduced by the researchers due to the general outlook of their personal or respective disciplines. As House (1996) purports, we often become trapped in our own paradigms. Such bias becomes very critical when the multi-disciplinary nature of goals is acknowledged. Knight *et al*, (2001) state that their study explored relationships between variables taken from disparate theoretical domains. Although the main focus of their research was on goal theory, they have argued that goals tie in varying ways to social-cognitive theory, prospect theory, agency theory, strategic management and incentive theory. Although their results were complex in certain respects, it is important to study how different theoretical management principles operate in concert, because in the real world such principles rarely, if ever, operate in isolation. Furthermore, Becker & Gerhart (1996) feel that the best research will likely come from taking an interdisciplinary focus drawing heavily on psychology, economics, finance and strategy. Each of these disciplines and perspectives involves a number of variables. As demonstrated by many, including Sumanth (1998), the multiplicity of dimensions requires a broader, comprehensive methodology.

1.1.3 Appearance of Confounding Factors

A major concern is that several constructs can be at play at the same time, as intimated by Becker & Gerhart (1996) who state, "Reflecting this multidisciplinary interest, the mechanisms by which human resource decisions create and sustain value are complicated and not well understood". Moreover, Ancona *et al* (2001) tend to use different lenses – strategic design, political, and cultural – to understand how organisations function, depending on their theoretical orientation. Wood (1999b) describes how high-performance management has been associated with a variety of concepts dealing with high-involvement, TQM, lean production, goal-setting and human

resource practices in a number of studies. He concludes that no consistent picture emerges from these studies, one key reason being that performance indicators might be consistent with more than one hypothesis, and that there has been no systematic examination of the link between different performance measures and particularly between HR outcomes and performance. In justifying such a conclusion, he enumerates many variables which would affect findings but are left ignored.

One consequence of the multi-dimensional nature of the topic is that the effect of any or each of the variables involved can be confounded with the effect of other variables. Interaction between variables is acknowledged, as exampled in goal and incentives interaction (Wright, 1992; Moussa, 1996; Lee *et al*, 1997; Knight *et al*, 2001). Research is thus complicated by the number of perspectives and factors which affect the outcomes which goals are meant to promote.

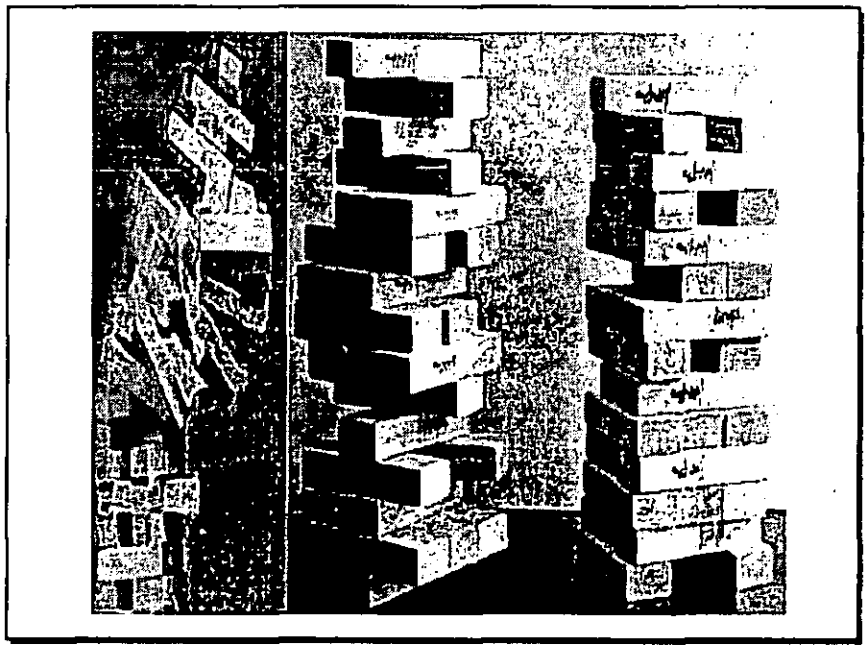


Figure 1.1 Jenga: A Model of Management Imperfections

Given the dynamics just discussed, cause and effect can be difficult to establish. An analogy could be made with the game called Jenga, which involves the building of a tower made by overlaying rectangular logs. In order to increase the height of the tower, logs are removed from the bottom of the pile and placed at the top. Eventually, the tower becomes more and more unstable until its downfall. Organisations with their respective management practices could be compared to Jenga towers (Figure 1.1). The reason for the instability cannot be attributed to one particular log. The confounding effect is that some logs may compensate for the absence of others. Each log or element of management practice left lacking contributes to the precariousness. The unforgiving outcome is the downfall of the tower. Each log removed contributes to the precariousness, but one eventually brings the tower down. The strength of an organisation is dependent upon the ability to fill the open spaces. Each of the many features of goals, first-line managers, work environment characteristic can be considered as individual logs. Their effectiveness may vary and thus may contribute to the precariousness or strength of the management process.

1.1.4 Over-Simplification of Reality

For research purposes, focusing on a certain aspect of goals in order to simplify the problem down to a manageable size is a generally accepted practice. However, the reality in the workplace may be diluted. This is highlighted by Hales (1999) who argues that researchers in the field have either contented themselves with the description and correlation or given priority to explaining variations. Theories of management have tended to suggest that managerial behaviour can be inferred, unproblematically, from the character of the broader management process rather than engaging with the evidence of these behaviours. This practice leads to Becker & Gerhart's (1996) observation that, at

times, there appears to be a major 'disconnect' between what the research literature says that firms should do and what firms actually do. "However, the subjects and tasks used in these investigations have some properties which may not be representative of management work" (Mitchell & Wood, 1994). Each of these criticisms highlight the lack of addressing reality in the workplace.

The workplace is composed of many constituents, each with their own set of perspectives, which pre-empt the possibility of arriving at descriptions that are all comprehensive. Sumanth (1998) like many in the field also uses a broad, generic definition encompassing overall measures which aim to improve total productivity, enhance profits, reduce inventories, as targets to be met. Such definitions fail to acknowledge the different perspectives which might be present at different levels in the organisation. "The tightly linked interconnections between individual effort, behaviour, output and outcome that are represented in traditional goal-setting research are simply not representative of a large portion of the workforce" (Shalley, 1991). It seems that there could be various perceptions as different constituencies perform diverse roles. Corporate executives, middle and first-line managers as well as workers are coloured with the same brush. Little evidence is available to document that there is a 'common' perception at all levels of management.

The time horizon is a crucial factor to be considered. According to Matthews & Mitchell (1994), goal-setting research, using short-term outcomes such as quantity of output, has provided limited knowledge regarding the impact of various types of goals. One tell-tale sign which confirms such observations is the high dependency of laboratory experiments conducted with university students posing as workers (Lee *et al*, 1997; Moussa, 2000;

Knight *et al*, 2001). Similarly, "Although caution must be exercised when generalizing the results of a short-term laboratory study to field settings, previous research has found such generalizations to be quite defensible if the lab study isolates the essential elements of real-life settings" (Locke, 1986). These limitations, whilst valid, make the applicability of such findings circumspect.

Hales (1999) raises the question of how representative is the research concerning management? He states that the lacuna is between, on the one hand, research evidence which has increasingly treated variations in managerial work as being of central significance, and has been reluctant to do more than describe common characteristics of managerial work and, on the other hand, theories of management which have been content to infer, rather than adduce or engage with the evidence on particular managerial practices. He concludes by affirming that managers act in the way they do because these actions are constituted, defined and legitimised by the resources and rules of the systems in which they are located, as actions which affirm the identity, responsibility and accountability of 'managers'. Such concerns are, in a way, similar to those related to measurement.

1.1.5 The Usage of Appropriate Metrics

Measurement is not an easy task. Finding relevant indicators is further complicated by the lack of consensus as to what is relevant. Three distinct facets of the issue are involved, a) the process of setting/establishing goals; b) the content of the goal, i.e., what is to be achieved and; c) causative factors impinging on what is to be achieved. Shalley (1991) states that there is almost no research on the content of goals. More needs to be understood about goal content and its effect on the goal-setting process. Mitchell &

Wood (1994) believe that goals have content. According to Siders *et al*, (2001) little research has related multiple attitudinal foci to job performance, with the possible exception of a study by Shalley (1991) which examined the effects of goal difficulty and creativity, and another by Gilliland & Landis (1992) on quality and quantity goals. First, it must be recognised that "choosing an indicator can reflect the values of either the company or the person setting the goal" (Mitchell & Wood, 1994). Objectives reflecting the interdependence of group members are seldom an issue in experimental goal-setting research. The wide range of interpretations that are possible in defining the nature of goals presents a special challenge in the development of a research instrument designed to ascertain the first-line managers' perspectives.

Surprisingly, with all the material available even with the existing shortcomings, very little is said about the actual nature of goals. Even more fundamental is to determine what constitutes the individual's actual goal focus at different levels of the organisation, and more specifically that of first-line managers. Also, there has been almost no discussion of the types of goals that are set, or should be set in different task settings. What is needed is both a descriptive understanding of what types of goals managers actually set as well as a normative theory of what types of goals should be set. There is virtually no research on goals selection (Matthews & Mitchell, 1994). In conversation with several authors referenced in this section, when asked the obvious question as to why there was little published on the nature of goals, the continuous refrain was that it is too difficult! A reference search in Business Source Elite and Psychology Information in EBSCO Host yielded little in terms of current articles, the oldest being in 1967. It was based upon the key words of Managerial Goal Setting; Managerial Goals; Management Goal Setting; Goal Setting Process most of which were not pertinent to this research.

The paucity of refereed published articles, and more specifically research-based articles, is indicative of the difficulties encountered due to the complexity of the issue.

1.1.6 An Overview on the Limitations of Existing Goal Research

Material related to goal research, except in very limited areas, is sparse. It is the result of studies at the scale of the national economy, at the corporate level or anecdotal. The result of experiments are conducted under narrowly defined settings (Locke & Brian, 1967; Latham & Yukl, 1975; Latham *et al*, 1988; Erez & Somech, 1996) or theoretical/conceptual constructs (Champagne & McAfee, 1989; Locke & Latham, 1990a). Research in goal setting to this point so far has been biased towards either simple non-management tasks (Locke & Latham, 1990b) or, simulations of more complex tasks (Wood & Bandura, 1989).

A number of studies take a piecemeal approach, highly geared to the relative discipline and purpose of the researcher (Latham & Steele, 1983; Erez *et al*, 1990). They may lack the comprehensive outlook that is inherent in the nature of goals. There is little "systematic knowledge of the process of how managerial ideology enters an organisation, is embedded in it over time and how organisations improve their business excellence through managerial ideology which can be defined as a . . .system of ideas comprising of beliefs, attitudes and insights which are related to each other. . . The concept of management ideology is purpose/goal-oriented and active in nature. The line management – production managers – seemed to be the most important inside the company for spreading ideas to the workers" (Savolainen, 2000). In short, the context of goal-setting research is different in many ways from managerial work.

There is a need to acknowledge that different goal perspectives may be held by individuals at different levels of an organisation. If the definition of goals is to reflect actual perspectives present in the marketplace, definitions should be derived from grass root data. Otherwise, it must be recognized that choosing an indicator can reflect the values of either the company or the person setting the goal (Mitchell & Wood, 1994). The reality is that, given the number of variables which might have to be monitored, the reliance on readily available statistics can be easily understood. The nature of goals needs to be clarified as it can encompass process, content and/or causative factors – the end or the means. It can be conceived that the nature of goals could vary depending on the level of management. Compounding and confounding effects make analysis difficult resulting in the oversimplication of reality. Table 1.1 provides an overview limitations described in the previous sections.

1)	lack of research on the actual content of goals at various levels of management (Shalley, 1991; Mitchell & Wood, 1994; Savolainen, 2000; Siders *et al*, 2001).
2)	need to determine the actual nature of goals (Matthews & Mitchell, 1994; Hales, 1999; Knight *et al*, 2001; Siders *et al*, 2001).
3)	compounding effect of various perspectives and different disciplines (Kopelman, 1986; Davis, 1989; Sumanth, 1998; Porter, 1999).
4)	oversimplification of reality (Shalley, 1991; Mitchell & Wood, 1994; Becker & Gerhart, 1996; Hales, 1999).
5)	research dominated by discipline and researchers' interests (House, 1996; Knight *et al*, 1996; Becker & Gerhart, 1996).
6)	failure to reflect the multidiscipline nature of the topic (Sumanth, 1998).
7)	disconnect between research findings and actual practices (Pfeffer & Sutton, 1999).
8)	confounding effect of the many variables (Wright, 1992; Becker & Gerhart, 1996; Moussa, 1996; Lee *et al*, 1997; Wood, 1999; Knight *et al*, 2001).

Table 1.1 An Overview of Limitations of Existing Research

When primary data is collected employing a questionnaire, the 'classical' approach is to use defined sets of responses. While such a practice makes tabulation simpler to analyse. the respondents have already been pre-directed in their possible choices of response. This approach may be appropriate when specific choices are being ascertained or where previous information is available (Miles & Huberman, 1994; Mitchell, 1998). However, when the research is exploratory, as is the case, such a practice limits the breadth of potential responses which can be unearthed.

It is evident that such shortcomings suggest the need for a different approach for data collection. The responses must be unfettered by ulterior agenda items or pre-set perspectives, inclusive of many and various possible responses and reflecting the actual perceptions of first-line managers, thus the use of an open-ended questionnaire.

1.1.7 Other Areas of Relevance

Not only does this research address the nature of goals, it also compares Canadian and Japanese first-line managers' responses. The literature search also extends to topics related to first-line managers, supervisors, foremen and others in order to ascertain whether any research, dealing with goals, might be available. Similarly. a review of material relating to Japanese managerial practices, both in English and Japanese, has yielded general material with sparse results akin to the actual nature of goals.

1.1.7.1 Japanese / North-American Managerial Practices

With the exception of Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1998) and Hofstede (1980, 1983, 1993), little has been published comparing management practices across cultures

and very little in the area of performance orientation and goals in different cultural settings. The value in contrasting differing perspectives helps to better identify the underlying factors which might be taken for granted when working with a congruous population. This is often an important issue as authors/researchers are the product of their environment.

Much has been written by Japanese and Western scholars about Japanese management. Given the plethora of books written about the Japanese phenomenon and productivity, why, therefore, undertake this research? Published books and articles reviewed in the preparation of this study are mostly descriptive of practices in general. No material was found that attempted to assess the responses by individuals in the various aspects of goals. The main purpose of earlier work, such as that by Dore (1967), was to provide a general historical background and description of Japanese managerial practices. Another group of authors (Nakane, 1970; Bieda, 1970; Cole, 1971; Sasaki, 1981) conveys the historical perspective on the evolution of the Japanese economy. Both groups provide general background information. More recently, the success of businesses like Nissan, Toyota and others in transplanting managerial practices in other countries has resulted in many anecdotal descriptions of the successes, pains, and challenges. According to Greif (1991) the transfer of such practices can be found in Western management thinking. Yoshimura & Anderson (1997), in describing Japanese business behaviour, echoes similar observations in that "Books by Westerners and Japanese tend to fall into three categories: books trying to explain corporate culture by relating it to Japanese culture in general; works relating a series of vignettes; the third type includes purely strategic or structural analysis of Japanese business". The literature review on business practices, goal setting and productivity has not revealed any studies that assessed systematically the

goal orientation of individuals in both Japanese and Western organisations, and more specifically at the first-line management level.

1.1.7.2 The Role of First-Line Management

Very little has been published which deals directly with first-line management, with articles appearing at different times in the form of waves. In the 1960s, the focus was on the difficult, sometimes contradictory expectations placed upon first-line managers, and their position was often maligned by management and labour alike (Leiter, 1948; Bonner, 1959; Patten, 1968; Fletcher, 1969; Hill, 1973). For many years in the North American industrial culture, the first-line management, especially production supervision, was neither fish nor fowl. According to Wickens (1987), having come mostly through the ranks, never quite part of management nor the rank and file, the first-line manager's position, because of perceived lack of authority and status, was never one of the most sought after positions. He points out that, until the last few years, companies themselves downgraded the role of production management. The growing number of functional departments have eroded the responsibility of the first-line supervisors and management paid lip service to its importance, often choosing to ignore them. It is no wonder that the foreman's job is often the one denigrated by all. While the importance of the first-line management's role might have been disparaged in the past, such luxury cannot be afforded with the leaner management structure seen in many enterprises today.

As the 1990s brought the advent of teams and empowerment, by default, the focus has indirectly spotlighted first-line managers because of the changes in expectation within the workplace. The role of first-line management has been revisited (McKinsey, 1999a). All such changes point to the need for better trained, highly motivated, people-effective

first-line managers. There must be a commitment to develop the skills of the resource that first-line managers represent if organisations, as a whole, are to be responsive to the competitive global challenges.

1.2 THE RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY

Because of the rate of change taking place on a global scale, the understanding of the term 'goal' is crucial because of its pivotal role in improving performance. Hence, this research is important in three distinct areas:

1) The global nature of competition is forcing organisations to focus on maintaining a competitive edge.

2) Changing organisational structure, roles and expectations due to a number of factors such as empowerment and skill competency, need to be reflected in the management process.

3) A clearer understanding of goals, particularly at various levels in the organisation is required to maintain highly productive organisations.

1.2.1 The Need for High-Performance: A Global Issue

The need to compete on a global scale has forced organisations and countries to rethink their managerial practices. Lopez (2000) states that the "world beating portion – autos, steel, machine tools and consumer electronics – is thriving, bettering any and all competitors' productivity by 20%". He describes the challenge that Japan faces and the acute awareness of the global competitive pressures. Similarly, established institutions in mature economies like Great Britain and Canada have to make their resources count to compensate for higher labour costs. Jackson (1998) points to a series of factors, such as the over-capacity existing in the world, lean manufacturing, agile manufacturing and production from emerging countries with low labour costs, that put pressure on well

established organisations. This is best illustrated by the automobile industry (*The Economist*, 1997; Zaun, 2002).

Whatever the country, be it Japan, the USA or France, enormous organisational changes are taking place. What started in the late 1980s and early 1990s in the USA in the form of re-engineering and de-layering of the firm has spread throughout the world (Hunt, 2001). While one could have interpreted such changes initially as a fad or just another 'programme', they have proved to be of major competitive concern for most corporations around the world (McKinley, 2000). The need for cost reduction, shortening the decision-making process and the empowerment of workers has forced most corporations to rethink their organisational structure (McKinley & Mone, 1998; JIN, 2001), for example, Ford changing from regional to world-wide management by car size (*The Economist*, 1994). Even Japan has not been immune: "Corporate moves are increasingly, notably improving management through downsizing and rationalisation. Since the spring of 1993, Kyocera has been cutting back its workforce by 9.2 %, Nippon Steel will decrease 12 departments in the administrative division to about half their current size. . ." (*Japan Labour Bulletin*, 1994), and Hitachi has mapped out a restructuring plan that would cut 17% of its workforce (Nihon Keizai Shimbun, 2001). Names like Minolta, Nippon Telegraph & Telephone and Honda are part of this ongoing trend taking place in Japan even today (Kunii, 1999). The need for change is acknowledged and encouraged by such organisations as the Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO) (1999) which states that corporate restructuring and reorganisation are necessary and would aid companies to realise major increases in business efficiency.

The complexity of these changes takes truly a global meaning, as many of the key players are multinationals. For example, NEC Corporation's restructuring efforts include job cuts at a semiconductor plant in Scotland and postponement of a boost in chip output at a Chinese joint venture (*China Daily*, 2001). Similarly, Toyota's productivity is often compared to the productivity and quality of plants throughout the world (Tait, 2001). No plant is immune to scrutiny either within their respective corporate structure, or within its industry worldwide (Womack *et al*, 1990).

Many developing countries, such as the Windward Islands (James, 2001) and Central Europe (Wagstyl & Wraight, 2001) with cheap labour and eager workforces, start to contend for the same world markets. Through the building of their own industrial complex or by attracting multinationals who are looking for cost advantages, these countries recognise the need to improve productivity, as exports are key to their development (*China Daily* Business, 1998; Zhao, 2000). No country and no plant is free from international competition.

1.2.2 Changing Managerial Expectations

The pressure to remain competitive in a global environment necessitates changes in organisational structure, effectively changing expectations of workers and the role of first-line management.

1.2.2.1 Changing Organisational Structure

In the process of improving their competitiveness, many corporations are looking to restructure their organisations (Coan, 1994; JIN, 1997; McKinley & Mone, 1998;

JETRO, 1999). Such terms as 're-engineering, de-layering, downsizing.' (McKinley, 2000) as well as 'empowering employees, establishing teams', are used to describe the nature of changes (Higgins, 2001). Even the process of re-engineering is being re-engineered (White, 1996). "Downsizing is all around us. Countries such as Japan, South Korea, Russia, Poland, and even Italy, Germany and France, for which downsizing had not been an option, have been forced into it" (Hunt, 2001). New labels of managerial processes, such as corporate agility and value engineering, are cropping up. As greater expectations are placed on each employee due to flatter organisational structures, the leverage of lower level management on their subordinates' performance is even more critical (Caulkin, 2001; Scase, 2001). Individuals in such functions often oversee 80% to 90% of a company's human resources. Thus, there is an important and definitive need to focus on the first-line manager.

1.2.2.2 Changing Roles and Expectations

While organisational structure is changing, so is the mode of management (Strozniak, 2000). Empowerment, quality circles and teams are changing the historical roles in the North American context, including those of the first-line manager (Wolff, 1999). As processes become computerised or robotised, the worker's level of expertise rises and, hence, the role of the supervisor becomes one of an advisor, facilitator or motivator (Jung & Avolio, 1999; Savolainen, 2000). Today, more than ever, a greater breadth of skills is expected, both in a technical and managerial context. The days of a whip cracking management have essentially passed (Hill & McCullough, 1998). Managers who understand people, process, economics and administration are now required (Birkhead *et al*, 2000; JIN, 2001). The role of teams and first-line managers has been further accentuated by the recognition that intimate knowledge of the process is an

insurmountable asset in terms of cost reduction and quality improvement (Imai, 1997), as demonstrated by Japanese firms that had to contend with a strong yen (¥) and increased competition.

White (1996) points out the need and the reality of changing roles of managers and workers brought about by the availability of information and the need to respond quickly to change. He also underscores the importance to address people issues. As techniques or labels change, organisational structures evolve. Yet, there are many functions which need to be performed, such as co-ordination, employee motivation, decision-making, communication and performance evaluation. The manager's job is to make decisions and solve problems in such a way that organisational productivity is enhanced (Schermerhorn, 1995). It is imperative, therefore, that the first-line managers' roles and expectations be understood in order to properly equip, motivate, making them as effective as possible and thus ensure productivity improvements (Reiger, 1995; Benkhoff, 1997; McKinley & Mone, 1998).

1.2.3 Importance of Goals in Performance Management

Should worldwide competitiveness be the objective, the primary goal focus of first-line managers is of critical importance. This is because "the productivity of most organisations is a function of the way in which technology, capital, and human resources are managed" (Latham & Wexley, 1994). Goals and objectives are acknowledged as key factors impacting on the performance of either the individual or group. This is illustrated by Carnegie who, back in the 1870s, understood the value of a competitive spirit and goals by posting performances between furnaces and shifts (Wall, 1970). In this regard,

more recently, Locke & Latham (1990) have proposed a model relating high performance to the setting of goals.

Most goal research (Latham & Saari, 1979; Erez *et al*, 1990; Lee *et al*, 1997) starts with the premise of measuring or assessing specific variables and outputs in relation to the degree of difficulty and the goal setting process. Findings are usually characterised as being universally applicable, irrespective of organisational consideration. However, this research attempts to determine the nature or focus of goals at the first-line management level, as well as ascertain if there are major differences between Canadian and Japanese first-line managers in their goal orientation.

1.3 AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

While different constructs have been proposed, none have been found which actually determine the nature of goals as perceived by first-line managers. Hence, the overall aim of the study is to fill an important gap in the existing knowledge of performance management. The first objective is to ascertain the nature of goals pursued by first-line managers. A major benefit of establishing the features of goals is to determine the differences between perceptions and theory. With primary data, management would then be in a position to confront the reality of the situation, which is the starting point for change (Mestre, 1993). Subsequent action can then be considered to modify management practices to achieve the desired results. The second is to compare such differences between Canadian and Japanese first-line managers. By contrasting the two different populations, the basic assumptions and management premise normally taken for granted, would thereby come to the fore. The universality of the findings as to applicability in different settings can then be assessed.

The attainment of these two major objectives is dependent upon assessing personal and environmental factors that are considered as part of the productivity/performance models. They include training needs, recognition and many other elements which influence respondents' own performance and that of their respective departments (Wageman, 1997). Internal consistency of the results between questions would further confirm the validity of the findings. This is because the results of the tabulations of one question dovetails with responses from others.

1.4 CONTRIBUTION OF THE RESEARCH TO EXISTING KNOWLEDGE

This research contributes to the existing body of knowledge in five distinct areas:

A. Light is shed on the nature of goals.

In some productivity models, the basic assumption is to define goals as operational measures, or ends to be accomplished (Locke & Latham, 1990; Daft, 1999). Other variables are expressed as environmental or contextual where the goals are set. As an illustration, required shipments, operational activities or project completion are ends to be pursued, while training, communication and motivation can be seen as environmental factors or means to accomplish the end (Lorriman & Kenjo, 1996). This research allows the verification, if such distinctions hold true, in the mind of the respondents.

B. The results are specific to one strata of the organisational structure.

The sample is targeted to one specific level of management, the first-line manager. The objective is not only to arrive at an understanding of goals but also to gain new insights that are representative of this level of management. Since the 1950s, there

has been little research in this area of management and its role (Patten, 1968; Fletcher, 1969; Hill, 1973; Mallory & Mollander, 1989). It is intended that the research would provide a closer look at the role and importance of first-line management in the present and rapidly changing work environment, mostly characterised by higher expectation for productivity, adaptability and innovation. Workplace practices, such as empowerment and teams, combined with a higher skilled workforce, also underscore the significance and the ever-changing role of first-line management.

C. The results are derived from primary data collected in the workplace.

The distinctions in the goal orientation are derived from questionnaires administered at the grass root level. The determination of goals is based upon the actual realization of individual responses using open-ended questions. This approach allows freedom to express opinions and perceptions while minimizing any influence which might direct the nature of the respondents' answers. As such, the responses provide an insight to goals, whatever they might be, without force-fitting the responses into a scale.

D. The interaction between goals and factors, found in the Generic Performance Model, is demonstrated.

Common dimensions recurring across the different productivity models, forming the building blocks of the questionnaire, are amalgamated into a Generic Performance Model. The results of the tabulation bring forth the outcome factors that form the concept of goals and objectives in the minds of the first-line managers. The

inference conveyed is that different types of variables can become goals for first-line managers.

E. The influence of management processes is made visible.

This relates to the differences in the goals pursued in the two distinct business environments of Canada and Japan; these dissimilarities are determined on the basis of the individuals' responses, but not imputed on the basis of a general description of corporate practices. Different management processes do influence the perception of goals.

To provide an example, the Japanese first-line managers' answers indicate that their efforts are focused on the success of their subordinates, whilst those of the Canadian respondents reflect concern about their own individual performance. When the Japanese first-line managers respond with 'soft' answers to the question of goals, this does not imply that there are none. On the contrary, there are daily, weekly, well-established targets set by middle management. While the North American would reply 'Make every individual accountable' (Daft, 1999; Schermerhorn, 1999), typically, the Japanese would answer 'The team has to deliver' (Whitehill, 1991; Lorriman & Kenjo, 1996). This does not imply that the individual performance is not recognised, but the implication is that no one individual can claim completion of a task until all team members collectively have achieved the group's goal. The answers between the two populations, while quite different in nature, must be contextualised to fully appreciate their intended meanings.

1.4.1 Imputed Theoretical Dimensions

The majority of studies related to this area of research are either anecdotal or based upon narrowly defined controlled experiments. Thus, it was felt that, because of the nature of goals, this research would encompass three major disciplines:

1) the behavioural as it relates to the respondents' goals, satisfaction and recognition
2) the organisational because it focuses on one specific level of management
3) the cross-cultural as it compares responses from two distinct populations.

Each of these areas converges on the issue of goals, productivity, performance and competitiveness.

The implication is that one should not assume that the nature of the goals held by first-line managers is a foregone conclusion. To investigate the interrelationship between specific variables, the items used to operationalise the performance factor have primarily focused on concerns with proving ability (MacGyvers, 1992; Sutton *et al*, 1996). The issue of ability to perform is different from the nature of the goals. The true nature of goals requires further exploration.

The evidence of earlier research exemplified by the Hawthorne studies (Reiger, 1995), and the debate between Latham and Erez, as reported by Locke *et al* (1988) illustrates that the issue surrounding goals is not so much about the number or specific outcome desired, but rather the process of actual execution. The theoretical consideration is that roles change as time allocation changes according to different levels of management (Mintzberg, 1973; Robbins & Langton, 2000). No research on time allocation and role has been found which exclusively deals with goals at different levels of management. Therefore, because of the many factors related to the implementation of goals, their confounding effect blurs the cause and effect relationship with outcomes. A new

approach is needed to gain fresh insights into the actual perception of goals by first-line managers which must be free of bias and engage in actual management processes.

There seems to be limitations to the methodology previously employed. Using a phenomenological map may prove to be more appropriate as it refocuses inquiry on the description of experience rather than concentrate on descriptions of items such as goals as an outcome (Polkinghorne, 1989). "The focus of such an approach is the understanding of a person's experiences of their world(s) and not the generation of explanatory laws" (Osborne, 1990). In their review of previous research dealing with identity assumed by individuals, Pratt & Foreman (2000) acknowledge that the primary function of modern managers is to manage multiple identities. They believe that relatively few researchers have examined how organisations and their leaders control or cope with multiple identities, few attempting to link individual-level dynamics with the broader dynamics facing managers in their respective organisational setting. As pointed out by Francesco & Gold (1998) "One way to understand an organisation's culture is to ask people". It appears that open-ended questions would be the best vehicle to provide an insight on the outlook of respondents.

1.4.2 Differences With Existing Body of Knowledge

Using the imputed theoretical dimensions, five unique features evolve from the methodology. These are:

(a) To focus on one specific management level. While earlier writings describe the management process and relate its virtues or desirability, they fail to assess the actual situation which exists at the shop floor level (Pratt & Foreman, 2000). The reason for focusing on first-line managers is that they account for 10% of the workforce, but have direct access to 80% of the human power employed by the corporation, thus representing a critical link in the management process

(Chen & Komorita, 1994; Wagner, 1995; Erez & Somech, 1996; Daniels & Burns, 1997; Savolainen, 2000).

(b) To elucidate on the individual's perceptions, using the respondents' own words. As pointed out by Sobeck *et al* (1998) and Pfeffer & Sutton (1999), corporate practices or expectations implemented through training programmes and other top-down management processes may not always be reflecting the individuals' perceptions or actual procedures.

(c) To provide insights into goals as perceived by first-line managers. According to Osborne (1990), "Generalisability for such an approach to human experience is based upon emphatic understanding rather than statistical explanatory procedures. Phenomenological research is not intended to test an hypothesis". The three components to note are: (1) This research focuses singularly on first-line managers. (2) Direct input from individuals as to their unique understanding, interpretation and viewpoints of their organisation is established without the use of survey instruments that direct the responses towards the researcher's interest. (3) The aim is also to determine if the variables identified by the responses are consistent with the variables commonly found in performance models.

(d) To let the data speak. The open-ended format used in the questionnaire not only avoids or reduces the possibility of introducing a certain amount of bias, but also does not limit the respondent's opportunities encouraging free-thinking in the number of areas which are of concern. "The aim is to understand a phenomenon by allowing the data to speak for themselves, and by attempting to put aside one's preconceptions as best as one can" (Osborne, 1990). Goals may not be uni-dimensional but multi-dimensional, because, as pointed out by Mintzberg (1973), Robbins & Langton (1999), and Prati & Foreman (2000), modern managers are called to assume many hats, roles or identities.

(e) To contrast between two distinct populations. The research employs the same survey instrument for two distinct populations with substantially different management practices (Whitehill, 1991; Lorriman & Kenjo, 1996). It might be argued that the term culture, instead of managerial environment should be used, as any difference between Canada and Japan could be attributed to their respective national character. The outcome is that the 'managerial environment' has been successfully transplanted by Japanese corporations and adopted by many foreign competitors. Case studies, such as NUMMY (Mahoney & Deckop, 1993), Nissan UK (Wickens, 1987) and Renault (Greif, 1991), demonstrate that some managerial practices can supersede limitations of the local environment. Hence, the contrast between the two settings helps to highlight the differences between the two populations. The results portrayed by the first-line managers' responses allow for assessing the impact of corporate managerial practices (or lack thereof) which produce the 'managerial environment'.

These five differences address some of the criticism directed towards existing research. The data is independent of academic disciplines and was collected in the field rather than in a laboratory or controlled work environment. The metrics are derived from the responses as compared to pre-established constructs. The results are specific to one level of the organisation but are not generic or descriptive in nature. The confounding nature of the variables is not a factor, as cause and effect is not the criteria for validity. The descriptive nature of the findings, the internal consistency and the existing literature provide a new insight into the nature of goals as perceived by first-line managers.

1.5 THE RATIONALE OF THE RESEARCH

The research methodology employed to meet the objectives is composed of four sections. The first describes the research mode used in the development of the data with the choice of format addressing the major criticisms directed to existing research. The second discusses the choice of procedure used in the analysis of the data collected. The third contains a summary of the survey procedure, and the last section highlights potential areas for future research.

1.5.1 An Inductive Approach

The first aim is to focus on the nature of goals as stated by first-line managers. By revealing their superior's (hereafter addressed as 'boss') expectations as well as their own sense of what to accomplish in the course of the year, the tabulation of the responses would provide a better understanding of the nature and focus of goals. The second objective is to determine how first-line managers' responses equate with the stated theories of performance/goals management. In comparing the responses of the Canadian

and Japanese populations, a contrast can be made by pinpointing divergence that can assist in illustrating the possible outlooks. While many studies strive to be prescriptive in establishing ideal conditions for goal setting and performance improvement (Latham *et al*, 1988; Erez *et al*, 1990; House, 1996; Moussa, 1996; Knight *et al*, 2001), this study is descriptive in that it analyses the perceptions found in the workplace. Thus, the major objective is to obtain responses free from external intervention, as might be the case in controlled experiments, liberating individuals from pre-set choices from pre-selected areas. Using an inductive approach (Gill & Johnson, 1991) allows for the determination of the actual focus of attention on goals as well as desired outcomes. Furthermore, it allows exploration without the specific objective of determining causality, such as in the case of the deductive approach. It is intended to show that the results of this survey would provide a 'topology' of attitudes about goals in the two respective countries.

1.5.2 Use of Phenomenological Analysis

Though there has been a call for a new look at the nature of goals, criticism of past research includes:

- the use of ready-made data (House, 1996; Daniels & Burns, 1997)
- failing to consider the multi-disciplinary nature of goals (Becker & Gerhart, 1996; Wood, 1999)
- the need to engage the evidence at the grass root level (Shalley, 1991; Mitchell & Wood, 1994; Hales, 1999)

In order to examine the nature or focus of goals (Shalley, 1991; Sider *et al*, 2001) and not to assume that one size fits all levels of management (Mintzberg, 1973; Robbins & Langton, 1999), the exclusive focus on experience provides access to all that can be directly known because knowledge is ultimately grounded in human experience

(Polkinghorne, 1989). He believes that phenomenological research is not intended to test an hypothesis but reveals that the aim is to understand a phenomenon by allowing the data to speak. In this way, the data provides new insights on the nature of goals of first-line managers.

1.5.3 The Outline of the Research Methodology

The research is both exploratory and descriptive in nature. It is exploratory in that no previous study has examined the nature of goals at the first-line management level using non-directed, open-ended responses. Each individual had the opportunity to respond in any way he/she saw fit. To assure candid responses, confidentiality had to be maintained, with no means of identifying individuals or organisations. It is descriptive in that the responses allow an insight of both Japanese and Canadian perceptions. In addition, because of the integrative analysis between questions, the results show a composite picture relating all the dimensions found in the Generic Performance Model.

During the design phase of the questionnaire, a series of pilot interviews were conducted with both Canadian and Japanese first-line managers to validate that the questions and ensure that they would allow as broad a response as possible from participants, without divulging the end purpose of the survey. Inputs were solicited from twenty Japanese first-line managers, studying at the University of Washington MBA program, to ensure that the questions would be interpreted in the Japanese context in the spirit in which they were intended. The translated questionnaire was re-tested, in Japan, with professors with experience in the U.S.A. to verify the translation and ascertain the questions' intent. Once the survey instrument was finalised, a total of 437 questionnaires were collected in Canada and 358 in Japan.

Each qualifying questionnaire was tabulated using typical phenomenological coding procedure. A mapping process based upon topical clusters was applied to further consolidate the responses into fewer categories. In order to assure the integrity of tabulation results obtained by the researcher, an independent rater ascertained and verified the coding of the Canadian data, and another who was a business person fluent in Japanese, was retained for the Japanese responses. This individual was different from the translators. This was done in order to avoid any undue influence on the translators to use terminology that could sway the interpretation of the responses. The primary concern was to interpret the data in the respondents' context.

While the methodology used to obtain the respondents' inputs is the same in the two countries, the interpretation of the survey responses was, nevertheless, a rather complex task as the responses had to be contextualised based upon the prevalent management practices. For example, the concepts of goals, expectations and results are not singularly comparable. Japanese firms have three kinds of goals: one deliberately ambiguous, one very explicit, and one taken for granted (Yoshimura & Anderson, 1997). Also, targets are explicit for groups rather than for individuals. Given the differences in goals, the survey results help demonstrate the reality of different expectations between the two environments. All emphasis on attitude reflects the characteristic Japanese preference for process over results. People are working to receive a favourable evaluation of their attitude and conduct; meeting targets is supposedly a by-product of correct behaviour, nothing more (Yoshimura & Anderson, 1997). In one setting the goal may be the end being pursued while, in another, the goal is focused on the means to get 'there', with the endpoint being a foregone conclusion (Mestre, 1999).

In order to gain a full understanding of Japanese practices, 38 corporate visits over a period of eight months were conducted in Japan, involving the interviewing of first-line, middle and upper management. These organisations, diverse in operations, included newspaper institutions, regional training centres, pollution/recycling operations, service industries such as banks and insurance, as well as manufacturing plants. During these visits, the issue of goals was thoroughly discussed. The purpose was to develop a greater understanding of the Japanese context in order to properly interpret the tabulation.

1.6 SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Though the research focuses on first-line managers' goals, it inevitably divulges their perceptions of goals. Perception, as defined by Buchanan & Huczynski (1985), "is the active psychological process in which stimuli are selected and organised into meaningful patterns". Different perceptions are affected by their beliefs, attitudes and biases which are the sum part of previous experiences including education, work experiences both in their current work environment and past employment. For the purpose of this study, communicated perceptions do not claim to be a comprehensive list of factors or outlooks, nor are they meant to be fully representative of the situation in which respondents work. However, the samples collected both in Japan and Canada are large enough to be representative of the existing situation in each country.

Whilst the nature of goals is at the heart of this research, a broad range of concepts and perspectives exists in both the market place and academia from which two basic classifications emerge: the ends to be achieved or the means by which tasks are to be accomplished. The prevalence in the mind of the respondents is being assessed on the basis of the answers provided. This does not imply that a focus on the means precludes

corporate practices which veer on the ends, as is generally the case in Japan. Thus, it was felt that it was imperative to evade questions on corporate practices as they might bias responses.

The scope of the research is to assess the actual perceptions on the field. In a sense, the raw material provided the means to test existing goal theories by comparing them to responses from the ground-floor level. The study does not attempt to establish causal relationships between productivity/performance and first-line managers' viewpoint; it does highlight the disparity between theory and reality. Open-ended questions, while being an effective tool for exploratory research, do not lend themselves to statistical procedures available, as compared to quantitative data derived from multiple-choice and rating scales. An inherent criticism could be the deficiency of rigorous statistical analysis. Such an analysis is based upon the premise that well defined categories already exist. In this instance, as is the case in exploratory research, the categories could only be established once the responses to open-ended questions are at hand. Another potential limitation of open-ended questions is that respondents may not be as comprehensive as would be hoped for, taking for granted some aspects of the issue being investigated. The sample size compensates for such limitations.

Devoting two questions to goals and objectives could be considered a limitation. However, by using open-ended questions, the net effect could produce a multitude of topics or issues. This positively contrasts with the use of multiple-choice questions as a larger number of questions would be required in order to cover the breadth or spectrum of issues. Some individuals might be tempted to provide short or superficial answers for the sake of expediency.

Overall, the use of open-ended questions proved to be successful and provided insights which might otherwise have been overlooked. The exploratory nature of the survey, in a multi-cultural environment, furnished much food for thought of first-line managers' goal perceptions, opening the door for future research.

1.7 FUTURE RESEARCH

This research raises many other issues, bringing to mind various questions:

- Are the features identified unique to the first-line managers?
- How would different levels respond?
- What constitutes a goal?
- What are the true management expectations of its first-line managers? Is it to play the role of 'pushers' such as on the Tokyo subways and trains?
- Would the transferability of Japanese management processes to other countries be successful as far as the establishment of goals is concerned?
- Are the differences unique to Japan and Canada?
- Would the results differ when employing the categories that have emerged within a multiple-choice questionnaire, which would allow a more rigorous statistical analysis?
- Would Japanese-owned organisations, operating in a foreign country or domestic organisations subscribing to Japanese practices, respond differently?

Each of these questions ought to be pursued to fully explore the nature of goals.

1.8 THE STRUCTURE OF THE THESIS

It has been decided to structure this thesis into four distinct parts (Figure 1.2). Part 1 – The Survey of the Literature – reviews the theoretical constructs in many disciplines which directly address the issue of goals, as well as examines models which attempt to

define the inter-relationship or interaction between the key variables involved. Based on these models, a 'Generic Performance Model' is proposed which takes into account common variables. Part II – The Analytical Procedure – reviews the procedures utilised in the analysis of the qualitative data collected; these were applied for Canada and Japan, with the only difference pertaining to the Japanese translation. Part III – Tabulation of the Data – presents tables, graphs, mapping and statistics; because of the volume generated, only sample material is included in the appendices. Part IV – Significance of the Findings – deals with the analysis and interpretation of the findings; it integrates and substantiates the results of the findings from the different questions as well as relates them to published work.

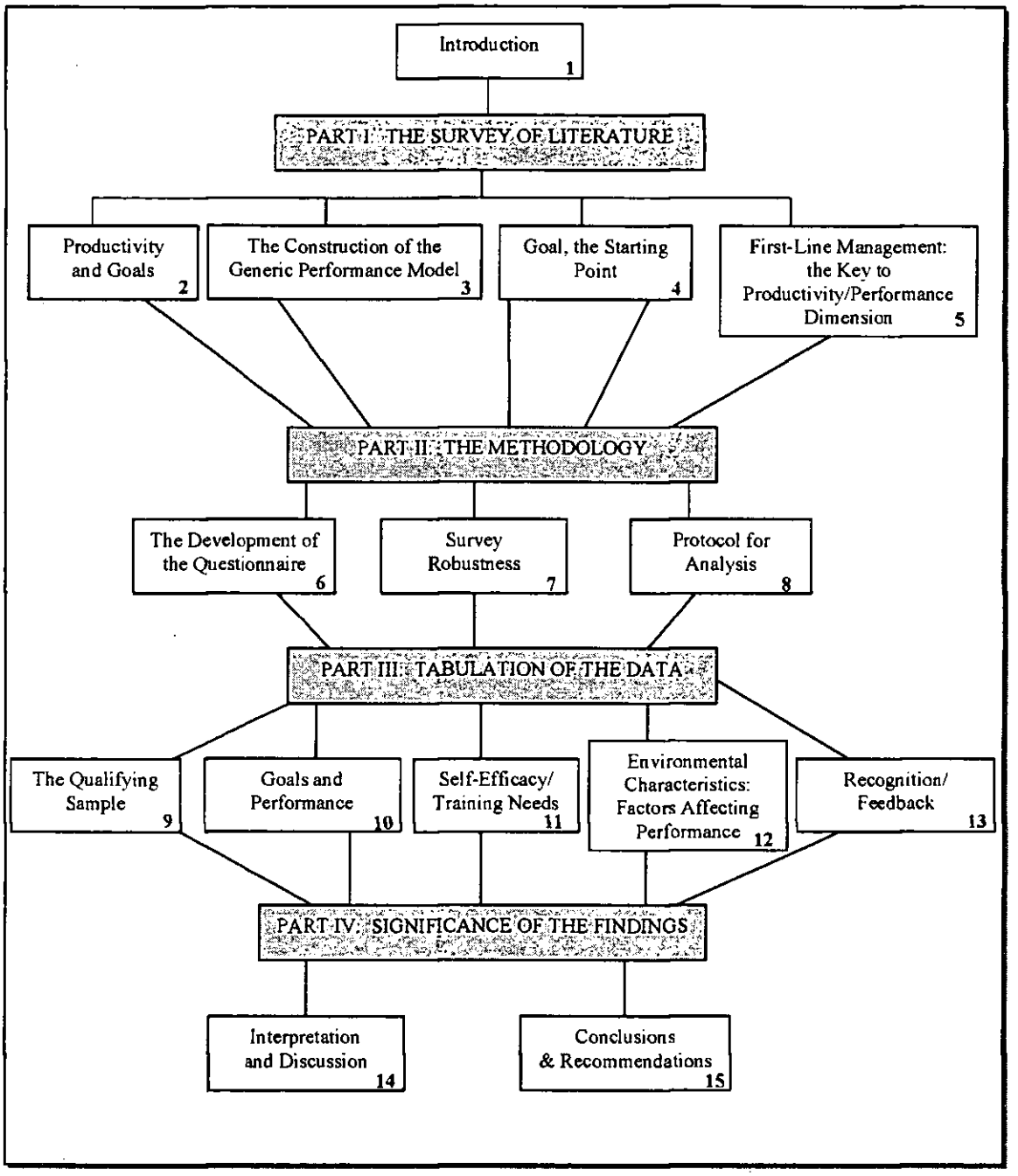


Figure 1.2 Structure of the Thesis

PART I

THE SURVEY OF THE LITERATURE

Part 1 addresses pertinent goal literature that, along with other key factors, affects productivity. Goals are usually presented as part of the managerial repertoire of management tools with the end purpose of affecting performance and thus, productivity (England, 1967; Sumanth, 1998). Models have been proffered to explain the interaction between goals and productivity along with other pertinent variables (Champagne & McAfee, 1989; Locke & Latham, 1990; Kopelman *et al*, 1990) that illustrate the complexity surrounding goals and a major end-purpose, productivity. More recently, authors have avoided proposing new integrative models, but have been satisfied in indicating the interaction between certain variables and their impact on productivity (Williams, 2001; Knight *et al*, 2001). Be it through benchmarking (Simpson & Kondouli, 2000), best practices (Hodgetts *et al*, 1994) or other goal setting processes (Mohanti, 1998; Lilrank *et al*, 2001), the end objective is usually to improve performance. This part also reviews the important features of productivity, goals and integrative models, as well as first-line management and its relationship to goals.

Chapter 2 demonstrates the universal concern for productivity. Improvements in productivity at the national level are, in the main, a result of the sum of the parts. While recognizing that government policies affect the business climate, the actual performance can only be achieved at the lowest levels in organisations. The definition of the concept ranges from the specific formulae to the popular application of the term, used interchangeably with goals performance and productivity. This terminology is also very much a function of the different disciplines that have studied the inter-relationships of the factors influencing productivity. Since the focus of this research is to determine the nature of differences in goal orientation of first-line managers and the potential

differences between Canadian and Japanese managers, it is important to acknowledge the potential range of perceptions.

Chapter 3 reviews the different constructs, models and paradigms, which posit to explicate the interaction among the different factors that affect both productivity and the ability to meet goals. These constructs include a chronological review of the advent of different management techniques, cultural / sociological interactions, cause-and-effect models, and Venn diagrams which acknowledge the overlap between disciplines. Out of the various concepts, there appears to be a 'Generic Performance Model' which incorporates the features common to these different perspectives.

Chapter 4 explores some of the features related to goals, a common element found in most models. Goals represent the primary focus of the research, determining the actual focus or nature of goals as conveyed by first-line managers. Differences in definitions point out the multi-dimensional nature of goals. Two basic definitions are explored, the ends or the means which represent disparate perspectives of goals. These distinctions are key and are tested against the results of the survey.

As this research is focusing on the perceptions of first-line management, Chapter 5 reviews the rationale for concentrating on that level of management. Many of the authors acknowledge the mediating influence of first-line managers on results (Imai, 1997; Daniels & Burns, 1997; Williams, 2001). Titles, roles and range of perception, under different management models, are some of the crucial facets of the position and are examined in relation to goals.

CHAPTER 2

PRODUCTIVITY AND GOALS

The heart's intention is the measure of all things
Moses Maimonides

Purpose is what gives life a meaning
Charles Henry Parkhurst

2.0 PREAMBLE

In the discussion of the health of an economy or that of a corporation, it seems that the issue of productivity, in its broadest sense, cannot be escaped. The topic is not a recent phenomenon. As declared by Sumanth (1998), the term 'productivity' was used as early as 1766, and defined as 'the faculty to produce'. Yet, as pointed out by Drucker (1992), even the 1950 edition of the *Concise Oxford English Dictionory* did not yet list 'productivity' in its present meaning. Recently, however, productivity has become a matter of national policy (Gagliano, 1998) as governments acknowledge its impact on economic growth and standard of living.

Whilst there is agreement on the fundamentals of the concept and its importance, it cannot be inferred that the term is always employed to measure the same thing. Brynjolfsson & Hitt (1998) point out that productivity is a simple concept. Whilst easy to define, it is notoriously difficult to measure, especially in a complex economy. As Smith (1995a) indicates, "Productivity can also be a matter of personal opinion or reflect project leaders' estimates of achievements". A detailed review of different perspectives and uses of terms is presented, aimed at demonstrating the wide variety of meanings of the concept of productivity and its inescapable relationship with goals.

2.1 IMPORTANCE AND UNIVERSALITY OF THE CONCEPT OF PRODUCTIVITY

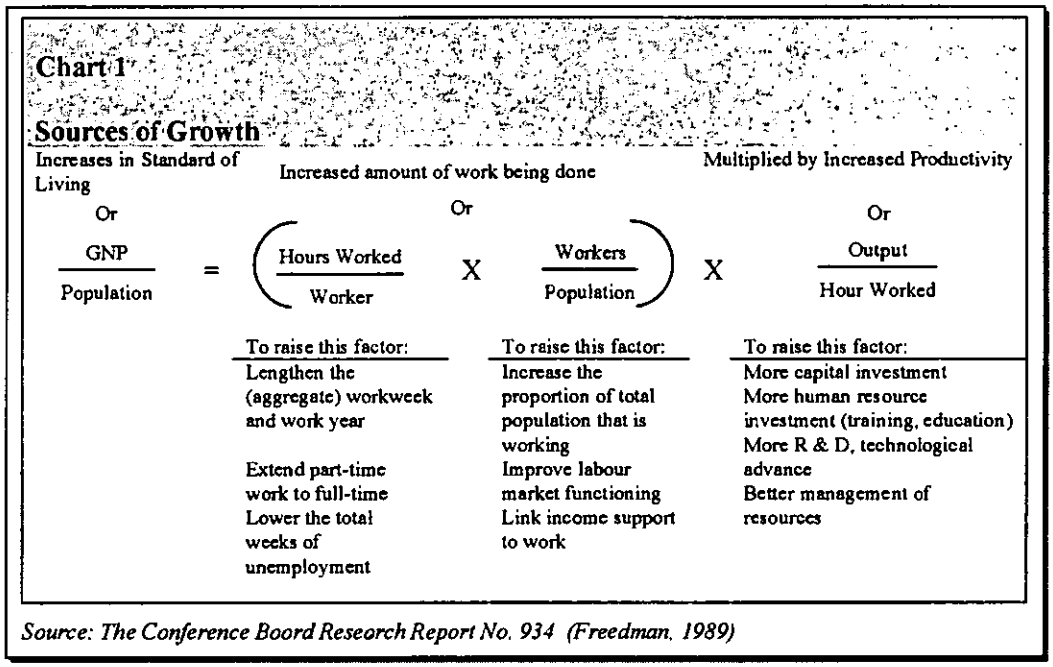
The concept of productivity has broad ramifications. Because of the dynamic global environment, it is under continual scrutiny (*The Economist*, 2000d). It is a concept relevant to all organisational sizes, ranging from individuals to national economies. The need for productivity is generally acknowledged as pertinent at the country level as well as at the lowest level of an individual organisation (Centre for the Study of Living Standards, 1998). The significance of productivity improvements is further accentuated by the globalisation phenomenon, the rapidity of communications and the rate of change in the market place (Human Resources Development Canada, 2000a).

2.1.1 The Impact on the Standard of Living

The importance of productivity has reached national and international proportions. "Productivity is one of the major driving forces of a high and sustainable living standard. Improvements in our innovative capacity are critical to productivity growth and wealth creation. High productivity produces high incomes" (Frank, 1999). Thurow (1999) affirms that "real wealth flows from increases in capital productivity - - getting more out of the same capital resources or using fewer capital resources to generate the same levels of market wealth". Productivity, key to improving the country's living standard (Centre for the Study of Living Standards, 1998) and while considered a villain by some (*The Economist*, 2000b), is very much a factor which cannot be ignored.

The relationship between standard of living and productivity is best illustrated within a report produced by the Conference Board (Freedman, 1989). The improvements in the standard of living of a country are directly impacted by the amount of work being done

and gains in productivity (Figure 2.1). When the standard of living is measured as the ratio of the Gross National Product (GNP) divided by the total population of the country, it is equal to the increased amount of work being done multiplied by increased productivity. The latter is measured as the ratio of the output generated, divided by the hours worked. The variables involved, such as GNP, hours worked, output and worker are multi-faceted, each with its own set of definitions that compound the complexity of productivity. Underlying the concept of productivity are the inferences of change and, thus, the establishment of goals. The impact of the relationship between standard of living and productivity is reflected by the universal concern voiced by various governments.



Source: The Conference Boord Research Report No. 934 (Freedman, 1989)

Figure 2.1 Standard of Living and Productivity

2.1.2 An Issue of Universal Concern

The challenge is universal, as demonstrated in recent public statements by diverse political schools of thought, such as the Chinese and Canadian governments. In an address, the Canadian Minister of Industry states that 'productivity', the measure of efficiency with which people, capital, resources and ideas are combined, is the most important determinant of our standard of living (Manley, 1999). Liao (1999) reports on the importance of productivity in their planned economy: "A market economy that conforms to the principles of socialism at the same time that it liberalises and develops productivity". *The Economist* (2000a) reviews the effects of social policies in different parts of the world and concludes that, eventually, the imperative of international competitiveness and productivity is a choice that countries face, as it impacts the standard of living.

2.1.3 Applicability at all Levels of the Economic Strata

While productivity is an issue of national concern, such statistics are also an indicator and reflection of the health of corporate enterprises. As a result of a Canadian Government research programme, Betcherman (1998) concludes that "macro goals regarding productivity, employment, and income may be served by micro policies that ultimately play out at the enterprise or workplace. The diffusion of organisational innovations can lead to aggregate efficiency gains". Government policies that assure a favourable industrial climate are necessary but not sufficient to assure healthy corporate performance.

2.1.4 The Impact of Managerial Practices

The McKinsey Global Institute (1999a) demonstrates that managerial practices supersede national culture. The issue of productivity is mentioned as a measure of management effectiveness in such areas as managing people (Morris, 2000). Stanley & Smeltzer (2000) relate productivity to the social cohesiveness of an organisation. "Skills and ability of business leaders to respond to current challenges are also critical to productivity improvement. The ability of management to create an *environment of inventiveness at work* is essential" (Frank, 1999). Kopelman (1986) suggests an all-inclusive model that relates societal culture and other intervening organisational factors to organisational productivity whilst Davis (1989), with a much narrower focus, concentrates on individual motivation and training and its impact on organisational productivity. Productivity is the yardstick of the various organisational activities.

2.1.5 Productivity Under Continual Scrutiny

Productivity is a topic under continual scrutiny. As an example, *The Economist* (2000a) ran a feature article on social policies and productivity; a week later, it provided an additional insight dealing with the low productivity growth in Europe (*The Economist*, 2000b). The continual tracking, both at the national and local level, is an indication of the concern on the trend of the statistics and their implications.

2.1.6 Productivity – A Gauge of a Dynamic Environment

Productivity is not a matter of choice or degree, but rather a matter of survival in a very dynamic global market. "Wide productivity gaps will ultimately be unsustainable in a global marketplace. Clearly, productivity matters to business as well as governments"

(Lewis, 1998). Stressing the importance of productivity, Porter (1998) states that the "concept of productivity is increasingly being recognised as more pertinent than competitiveness". Arthur (1998) believes the "recognition that the industrial paradigm of post-war decades, the notion of security involved protection ***from*** change, is being redefined in the emerging post-industrial paradigm, with security now being viewed as the ability *to* change". Politicians, business managers and academicians, all agree on the importance of competitiveness and productivity in the now global market. Whatever economic system or political persuasion, they all acknowledge the primacy of productivity.

2.2 DISCIPLINES AND PRODUCTIVITY

Over time, several fields of research have been concerned with the many issues of productivity/performance. Tutle (1983) acknowledges the difference in definition based upon the discipline of the beholder, accountant, economist, engineer, and so on. Each, from the perspective of his/her own discipline, shares a common purpose of improving performance and thus productivity, while having substantially different operational definitions. These, sometimes used interchangeably, have encroached on the terms of performance and goals. The different perspectives are grouped into three major schools of thought: the behaviourists, the economists, and the methodologists (Table 2.1).

	Discipline	Unit of Research	Purpose
Behaviourists	Organisational Behaviour / Organisational Development	Work environment	Productive behaviour
Economists	Economics	Macro-economics markets	National economic policy
Methodologists	Industrial Engineering / Methods	Techniques	Improved procedures

Table 2.1 Disciplines Dealing with Productivity

Several points of commonality emerge, namely: the measurement of change, the implied goal of improving performance, the importance of human resources / human capital, the active role of management and the need to explain the interaction between the different factors involved.

2.2.1 The Behaviourists

It can be seen that the behaviourists attempt to relate motivational theories to the ensuing results of individual and group behaviour. Starting with the Hawthorne studies (Homans, 1941) which experimented with lighting and its impact on performance, the field has continued to investigate human performance as demonstrated by authors such as Locke & Latham (1990) and Pfeffer & Sutton (1999). Organisational psychologists tend to focus on the 'productivity' of individual and small groups, working on the assumption that increases in the performance of these units' aggregate enhance the performance of the organisation as a whole (Weiss, 1984). Psychologists and management theorists often use the term 'productivity' interchangeably with terms, such as performance and effectiveness, or more as labels for a class of variables that include constructs such as output, quality, turnover and grievances. Interestingly, this liberal usage more accurately characterises the meaning of productivity among actual managers and organisational decision-makers (Weiss, 1984). The breadth of variables, the wide scope of criteria, and the variety of purposes render the task of measuring productivity difficult.

One of the developing areas within the behaviourists' field is social cohesion (Nymark & Lahey, 1999; Ritzen, 2000; Stanley & Smeltzer, 2000), an important aspect to be considered. Ritzen (2000) defines it as a "state of affairs in which a group of people (whether the entity concerned is a community, a corporation or a country) demonstrate

an aptitude for collaboration that produces a climate for change that, in the long run, benefits all. The extent to which those affected will work together when crisis strikes or opportunity knocks is a key factor shaping performance". Social cohesion is, thus, a factor affecting productivity along with other human factors such as motivation (Herzberg *et al*, 1993), training (Human Resources Development Canada, 2000b) and goal-setting (Locke & Latham, 1990). The impact of the human factor is best illustrated by a survey conducted by Watson Wyatt Worldwide (*Industry Week*, 2000), which finds that "companies with high employee commitment produced a three-year return to shareholders of 112%, compared with a 76% return at companies whose employees had a low commitment". The success of practices, such as Six Sigma, is wholly dependent on the human element (Caulcutt, 2001).

Organisational development and design is also very much an area of scrutiny. Competitive pressures have forced enterprises to rethink and often redirect their strategies, their structures and many aspects of behaviour (Human Resources Development Canada, 2000a), such as Ford's effort to improve productivity: "Trotman is also counting on a shift to product-oriented teams to improve productivity. Ford cut the time to get an engine from design to testing from 24 months to 100 days" (Treece *et al*, 1995). Not only is the organisational structure part of the equation but also the time dimension which clearly demonstrates the implicit inclusion of goals.

2.2.2 The Economists

The economists concentrate on the macro level of an economy or industrial sector as well as focus on total productivity and labour productivity. "Though economists have tried their best in the last several decades to specify the true relationship between input supply,

such as capital, land and labour as well as productivity growth, they have not been successful in presenting models that explain the actual relationship that pertains between human factors, productivity change, and output growth" (Adjibolosoo, 1999): two such recent studies were conducted in Canada by Frank (1999), and in England by The McKinsey Global Institute (1998). The common objective of these studies was to measure differences in productivity as this affects the economic health of a given country and provide insights into policies which might enhance the economic well-being of that country. But, as pointed out by Gagliano (1998) an "effective and efficient workplace is the result of choices made by employers and employees. Governments cannot impose attitudes and behaviours". The results of these two studies are of particular interest because the factors, which are identified as key factors affecting productivity, are in consonance with the findings of this research as derived from surveys conducted with Canadian/Japanese first-line managers. The explicit comparison in the rate of productivity improvement at the national level implies the goal of at least maintaining a rate comparable to the rest of the world.

2.2.3 The Methodologists

The methodologists focus their attention on specific techniques in the classical lines of industrial engineering. As early as 1911, individuals such as Taylor (1967) studied the effect of work practices on output. More recently, Thor (1994), Sumanth (1998) and American Productivity and Quality Centre (1999) have continued in these footsteps. Today, these efforts are best characterised by practices such as Quality Circles, Total Quality Management and Just-in-Time with Womack & Jones (1996) and Delbridge (2000) developing the Japanese concept of lean manufacturing. Hence, the

methodologists' main focus is to improve management practices and, thus, the goal to improve productivity.

As an overview, while each of these different schools of thought agrees on the general concept of productivity, they differ in the paradigms and variables used to explain outcomes: the economists concentrate on the macro level and the behaviourists and methodologists devote attention to the micro level in terms of the individual and specific processes. The issue is not one of semantics but a reflection of the broad use of the term by many constituencies. It seems that beyond these differences, there is a comparative process that implicitly has the aim of maintaining or improving competitiveness.

2.3 THE INTERCHANGEABILITY OF TERMS

Several disciplines use the term productivity. Because they vary greatly in their analysis and interpretation of cause and effect and take different perspectives on the entities assessed with a range of measuring performance from the national economy to the individual, the term has taken a generic meaning. Terms, such as performance and goals, are introduced and become part of the landscape. It is important, therefore, to recognise the breadth of such terminology and its relevance to this research, as individuals may perceive the topic from a number of perspectives. The contiguous use, the narrow and diverse outlook of researchers' studies, the variety of nomenclature geared to each discipline's outlook and the various aspects of productivity, all contribute to confound the use of the term.

The inference of such varied perspectives can influence the general usage of the terms and, thus, the responses of first-line managers are expected to reflect the context of their

environment. The various definitions of goals, productivity and performance illustrate the lack of agreement on semantics and the interchangeability in the use of terms, even by the so-called 'expert'. Such diverse outlooks must be taken into account in the design of this research, as well as in the interpretation of the tabulations.

2.3.1 The Use of Contiguous Terms

'Productivity' is defined as the ratio of output yielded from a process compared to inputs spent (Mahoney, 1990). According to Brinkerhoff & Dressler (1990), Campbell & Campbell (1990), Harris (1994), and Schermerhorn (1996), the difficulties begin with the actual mechanics of applying the concept in operational terms. 'Productivity', 'performance', and 'goals' are employed, as contiguous terms used conjunctionally, if not interchangeably. Drucker (1954) sees 'performance' managers as setting specific 'goals', a view supported by McGregor (1957), Odiorne (1965), Locke & Latham (1990) and Schermerhorn (1999). Katzell & Guzzo (1983), in their review of the literature, find that the majority (90%) of the experiments related to 'goal' setting yielded improvements in 'productivity'. Terpstra & Rozell (1994) discover that MBOs positively correlates with annual profit and profit growth. Similarly, in a 1997 survey conducted of *Fortune* companies, Coopers & Lybrand ascertain that the three key factors common for 'Successful Organisations' are strong leadership, effective communication, and a tight alignment of people and organisational 'goals' (Smith, 1998). Schermerhorn *et al* (2000) refers to 'High Performance Organisations' and 'High Performance Job Design' whilst Sumanth (1998) coins the phrase, 'Total Productivity Management' (TPmgt). It appears, therefore, that performance, goals and productivity are inextricably connected.

2.3.2 Productivity and the 'Elephant' Analogy

The concept of productivity/performance management can be related to the story of the two blind men returning to their village describing their encounter with an elephant. The person who touched the trunk said that it was like a fire hose, the one who touched a leg claimed it was like a tree trunk. Each had his own story and explanation. It seems that the whole area of performance management and productivity varies depending on the researcher's perspective, the discipline, the purpose, the availability of metrics being applied, as well as the conceptual framework to be used. In order to illustrate the inter-relationship that exists between the terms, a typical systems analysis of performance management model has been developed (Figure 2.2).

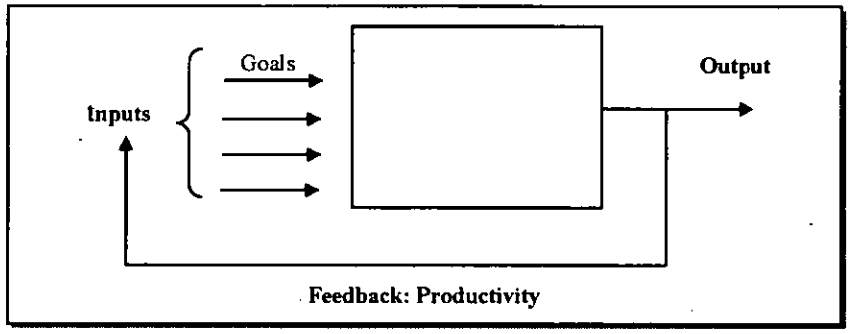


Figure 2.2 Systems Analysis of Performance Management Model

It is possible to consider 'goals' as one of the inputs to the system at any given time; 'performance' statistics represent the output and changes in 'productivity' between periods are part of the feedback loop, which does not so much compare output to input, but rather output to input of a period compared to the previous. Each feature of the system is distinct yet very inter-dependent and can be examined either individually or as a whole system.

2.3.3 Level of Abstraction

A reason for the interchangeability of terms may be due to assumptions, or degree of abstraction, made in discussing the issue. While a purist may cringe at the liberty taken in switching back and forth when using productivity and performance interchangeably, the two can be readily reconciled. The simplest scenario would be to keep the input or resources constant between two time periods. As such, the measurement of 'productivity' can be viewed as a comparison of outputs or performance (Figure 2.3). However, major factors, such as the human dimension, may be ignored.

$$\frac{\text{Productivity}(t_2)}{\text{Productivity}(t_1)} = \frac{\dfrac{\text{Output}(t_2)}{\text{Input}(t_2)}}{\dfrac{\text{Output}(t_1)}{\text{Input}(t_1)}} = \frac{\text{Output}(t2)}{\text{Output}(t1)} *$$

* Inputs (t_2) = Inputs (t_1)

Figure 2.3 The Relationship Between Productivity and Performance

In discussion about performance, 'productivity' is frequently used without defining the parameters. The requirement is to come to some agreement about the definition that would be most useful and use it consistently (Campbell, 1994). As productivity is a multi-faceted outcome resulting from the influence of many variables such as culture, technology, capital investments and government practices, scholars recognise the nature of the challenges. As Krugman (1995) states, "productivity isn't everything, but in the long run it is almost everything". This view clearly reveals the difficulties of trying to pin down a working definition of the productivity concept since these differences in interpretation are crucial to the design of this research.

2.3.4 Added Nomenclature

Productivity finds itself attached to such qualifiers as total factor productivity, partial factor productivity, comprehensive productivity and labour productivity. Even at the macro level, definitions keep proliferating such as quality adjusted measures of economic productivity and growth for individual industries (The Conference Board, 2000). According to Pritchard (1995), productivity has been used to refer to individuals, groups, organisational units, entire organisations, industries and nations. It has been perceived as a synonym for output, efficiency, motivation, individual performance, organisational effectiveness, production, profitability, cost/effectiveness, competitiveness as well as work quality. A reason for such diverse nomenclature is the continual search for understanding and an ever expanding list of factors to be considered.

The issue of definition is further compounded when Sumanth (1996) states that "earlier research shows that about 80% of the indicators companies use are really non-standard". Sumanth (1998) extends his focus from productivity measurement to Total Productivity Management (TPmgt) through his Total Productivity Model (TPM). The rationale for coining this label is explained by identifying the overlap of disciplines affecting productivity. TPM is built on the system theory approach to identifying all input factors associated with the production of outputs, and TPmgt is based on the vast research done by behavioural scientists such as psychologists and sociologists. Figure 2.4 illustrates productivity and the overlap of disciplines. The terms productivity, performance and goals seem to be part of the daily vocabulary of an organisation.

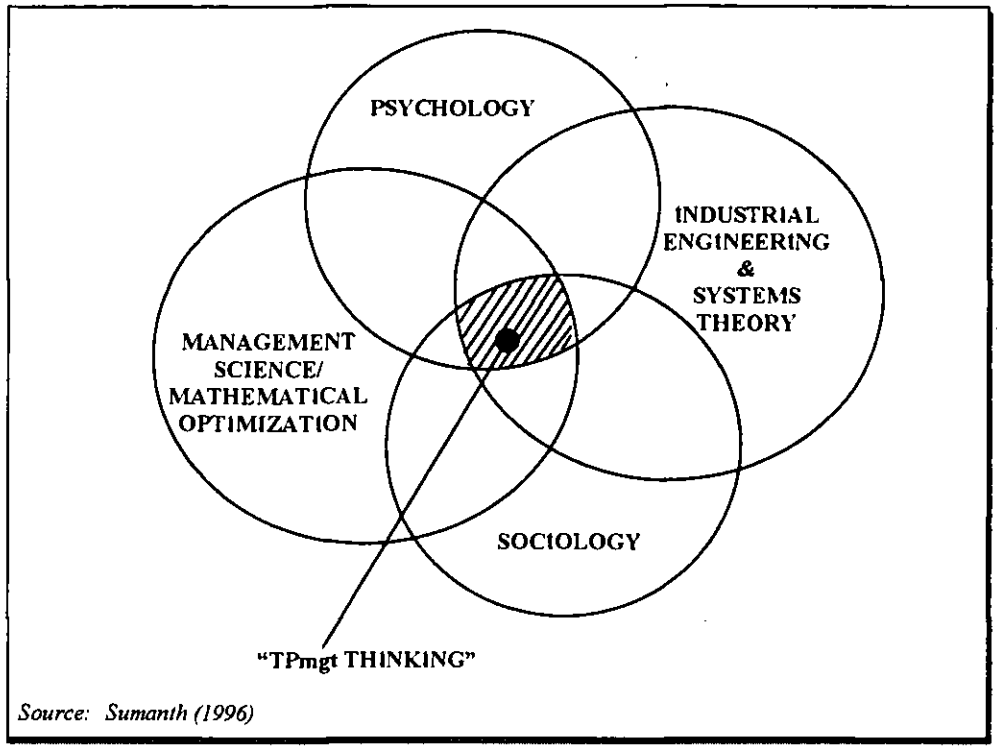


Figure 2.4 Productivity and the Overlap of Disciplines

The Centre for the Study of Living Standards (1998) shares Sumanth's outlook. It views productivity as being a multi-disciplinary topic composed of a three-way complementarity between physical capital, human capital and technological progress. Factors beyond the confines of the corporation can encompass quality and availability of natural resources, industrial structure and inter-sectional shifts, capital accumulation, the rate of technological progress, quality of human resources and the macro/micro economic environment.

The broader definitions reflect the wide array of variables, with productivity being a performance variable to be compared with other performance variables. As Mahoney

(1990) purports, often, any performance variable is presumed synonymous with productivity.

Williams (1998) believes that the concern for organisational productivity has not disappeared, but it has been overtaken by a wider-ranging desire to improve all aspects of the organisation's performance to maintain competitiveness. Consequently, performance has come to be measured by using multiple indicators, embracing productivity efficiency as well as effectiveness, adaptability and responsiveness. Hence, it seems possible to discern three main perspectives systems for managing (a) organisational performance, (b) employee performance and (c) integrating the management of both the organisational and employee performances. In an effort to elucidate the debate, the terms proliferate.

2.3.5 Productivity: The Process

Productivity has expanded from being a metric of the ratio of output to input to an issue of measuring the impact of multiple factors belonging to different disciplines and the process thereof. Because of the inherent involvement and participation of employees, management processes and interpersonal dynamics need to be included in the equation. Kaydos (1999) acknowledges the difficulty of measuring productivity. He stresses that there are many ways to look at productivity and more than one measure may be required to provide a complete picture of what is happening. This is because productivity is not a tangible output of a process but must be measured to provide a complete picture of performance. Such views of productivity are all encompassing; they reflect not only the statistic and the ratio, but also the process and the environment.

2.3.6 An Overview

It can be seen that the variability in definition ranges from productivity being a statistic to a process which generates outputs, the performance of which is being evaluated by the differences over time. As Sharman (2000) declares, productivity deals with the effective execution of strategy, encompassing all the activities of all persons involved in the business of the enterprise and all the other resources employed. However, as Underdown & Associates (1999a,b) propose, other measurements are evolving, particularly among world-class companies where competitiveness is more closely linked to time-based measures. Every aspect of measurement and the process comes into play, depending on the perspective of the beholder.

2.4 PRODUCTIVITY: THE AREAS OF CONSENSUS

Lewis (1998) acknowledges that wide productivity gaps will ultimately be unsustainable in a global marketplace in which customers have their pick of goods and services from anywhere in the world and best-practice companies seek to extend their advantage into more and more national markets. However, in relation to productivity, there are points of commonality to be considered. In the main, the factors that influence productivity are both human and organisational (Flett, 1999). Hence, there is an inevitable need to look at each factor in greater depth.

2.4.1 The Importance of Human Resources

Productivity comes not from machines but from people – employees who design, maintain and operate the equipment or manage the work flow (Latham *et al*, 1994). The ability to unlock the productivity potential contained in physical capital and from

innovation is directly dependent upon the skills and abilities of the labour force (Sulzenko, 1999). Corporations are realising that their most important assets are not equipment, technology or machines but rather human capital and the know-how that resides in the minds of their employees (Newhouse *et al*, 1998). Thus, it can be deduced that productivity requires human intervention and a certain level of know-how.

The Canadian Policy Research Group (1996), in an attempt to analyse the decline in Canadian productivity, puts forward the view that innovators are more likely than non-innovators to emphasise a human-resource policy that develops skilled employees via training programmes; they place greater stress on the contribution that their workers' skills make to the company's growth and also believe that they have a better labour climate. The Human Resources Development Canada (2000b) reports the close link between human capital and learning organisations expressing the notion of a collective group in which shared knowledge, team-work and norms of behaviour and interaction constitute a valuable source of organisational capacity. Similarly, Oram & Wellins (1995) conclude that world-class productivity depends on people and empowerment. The Prime Minister of Japan recently acknowledged the importance of the human dimension by stating: "I shall first channel my efforts into the 'challenge for creativity'. The development of human resources imbued with immense creativity, human resources filled with high aspirations and capable of applying their creative powers to the full in a variety of areas" (Obuchi, 2000).

According to Frank (1999), a commitment on the part of business to invest in its workforce by supporting workplace education programmes and creating a culture of learning in the workplace is essential to the global competitiveness. In studies conducted

on the relationship between training and performance, Frank (1999) and Bassi & McMurrer (1998) have shown that companies which invested more heavily in training were more successful and profitable and were more likely to report improvements in overall performance. Personal characteristics such as motivation, traits and creativity, as well as organisational features such as learning organisation, team-work and empowerment, are some of the outcomes identified in conjunction with training. As such, can employees' potential be unleashed? Skills and abilities, if left dormant or neglected, must be energised.

The content and form of training is very important. The McKinsey Global Institute (1999b) points out that the level of education of a workforce is not sufficient to assure higher levels of productivity. The comparison made between German workers, who are provided with an extensive apprenticeship programme, and the U.S. workers, who achieve higher levels of labour productivity, shows that the key factors seem to be the development of employer-led training and the design of processes to suit particular levels of skills. Naughton (2000) affirms that larger employers, such as Wal-Mart and McDonald, no longer send fresh hires to spend days watching training videos but trust on-the-job training.

One major difference between Canadian and Japanese management practices is in the area of employee development. In the Japanese scenario, the corporations recognise that their employees need to learn the ways of the organisation, which is reflected in their close scrutiny of applicants and the extensive orientation process (Mestre & Stainer, 1995). Once recruited, all employees are involved in a development programme which extends to every level of the organisation. By contrast, within Canada, such

personal/personnel development remains in the realm of the individual and not of the corporation. As a result of such policies the upshot is predictable. In a report from a panel set up by the Prime Minister's Advisory Council on Science and Technology. Walton (2000) reports *The Globe and Mail* as stating that Canadians possess technical skills "But they can't work in teams, solve 'real world problems'". Not only must these human resources be trained, but the content of the training is also a crucial element. Job-oriented, company-relevant on-the-job training are just some of the qualifiers being used.

2.4.2 The Significance of Goals

A component to understanding changes in productivity is to determine the nature and quality of the efforts expended. The fundamental question is not: what productivity measures should be used? As Ruch (1984) indicates, the question is: what are the organisational objectives? with a secondary question: what set of individual productivity measures will direct the behaviour of the employees to meet those objectives as they work toward their own personal goals? His view is that the aim of the organisation is to align work behaviour with organisational goals. Best-practice organisations actively seek to align individual goals with corporate goals. Thus, there must be interaction between goals, performance, measurement and productivity. The law of effect, the cornerstone of operant psychology, says that behaviour is a function of its consequences; positive outcomes reinforce behaviours, which leads to them being repeated and expanded. Simply establishing a measure and feeding back the results to the employee can be regarded as a form of reinforcement (Ruch, 1984). The implication is that achieving goals will eventually bring about improvements in productivity.

Even in a centrally planned economy like China, the principles of accountability and ownership of results are becoming more and more important. The introduction of the contract responsibility system has proved to be a significant success. The policy, initiated in the mid-1980s, has inspired the enthusiasm and creativity of small state-owned and collective enterprises. The productivity and profitability of the industrial sector was twice as high in 1992 as in the year the policy was introduced (*China Daily*, 1998).

The importance of goals is also related to what is being measured. Measures vertically align business priorities and cascade to all levels of the organisation, as well as horizontally link to processes. Designing performance measures is an organisational imperative as it drives the desired behaviour which achieves results. The deployment of responsibility and accountability for change is achieved by assigning owners to particular processes. This is markedly more effective than the random search for productivity through reactively chasing problems (Camp, 1998).

Schermerhorn (1999) defines productivity as a "summary measure of quantity and quality of work performance, with resource utilisation taken into account". He ties it to organisational performance with goal attainment being substituted by work performance (Table 2.2).

	High	*Effective but not efficient;* goals achieved but resources wasted	*Effective and efficient;* goals achieved and resources well utilised; zone of high productivity
Goal attainment	Low	*Neither effective nor efficient;* goals not achieved; resources wasted in the process	*Efficient but not effective;* no wasted resources; but goals not achieved
		Poor	Good

Resource utilisation

Source: Schermerhorn (1999)

Table 2.2 Productivity and Organisational Performance

Similar observations are echoed in the context of Japanese management techniques. LeBoeuf (1982) refers to national commitment, capital formation, information, education, competitive spirit, corporate culture, development of managers through experience as well as patience and futurism. Under national commitment, he states that "Japan is one gigantic program of management by objectives". The term *hoshin kanri* (Witcher & Butterworth, 1997, 2001) incorporates the organisation's vision, the alignment of departmental and individual efforts throughout the organisation, a built-in continuous effort to improve. It is founded upon a system of 'daily management' with measurements reviewed frequently. It is supported by many lower-level plans which are progressively more detailed and more short-term. The goals are of two types – quantified targets and the actions required to achieve these. No target will be adopted unless the means of achieving it have been agreed, and both then become part of the plan (Hutton, 1997). Goals are therefore, integral to the productivity process.

As far as Guzzo (1990) is concerned, the available evidence indicates beyond doubt, that individual performance/productivity improvements occur with psychologically based programmes for managing human resources. In his view, several of these, such as feedback, training, selection, goal setting and work redesign, seem quite robust in their

impact on productivity. As performance is the avenue by which individuals have an impact on productivity, then it is useful to enquire about the basic antecedent factors of performance, six of which have been identified by Campbell & Campbell (1990), with one relating to task or goal understanding. Productivity improves when people know what their goals are. A large proportion of our productivity problems today is caused by people who don't know their job's main purpose (LeBoeuf, 1982). Goal setting is a motivational technique with demonstrable productivity payoffs when output aspects of productivity are assessed (Guzzo, 1990). Hence, if productivity is considered as the measure of performance over time, and goal setting is directly related to performance, the articulation of individual goals and the focus of these are primordial to the organisation. Only recently has productivity measurement been considered a responsibility of line management at the unit level (Brinkerhoff & Dressler, 1990; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Lubit, 2001). For this reason, first-line management and goal setting have become the focus of this research.

2.4.3 The Challenge in Measuring Productivity

The term 'productivity' implies to change over time. The obvious question is how or why the change took place and how can it be sustained? Implied in the definition of productivity is comparability between periods, units, organisations or even countries, benchmarking with each other. It is tempting to measure productivity of different production systems in terms of a common base, when in fact the differences in output are the result of differences in technology or product design (Mahoney, 1990; Smith 1995a,b).

Hackman (1984) asks the question: "How can we learn about changes in productivity that are not 'caused' in any traditional sense by discernible, independent variables? We need to recognise that the ways we were taught to do good research may be a great deal more appropriate for basic scholarship in individual or social psychology, than for studies of dynamic processes in evolving social systems". It is generally accepted that corporations or organisations are, by their nature, evolving social systems and, hence, measurability of the factors involved presents a challenge. Because of the difficulties in assuring comparability or determining cause and effect embedded within the many factors, certain assumptions have to be made.

The difficulty in assuring comparability is further complicated by the sample size required in order to assess cause and effect. Freeman & Kleiner (2000) explain that, in order to measure the 'true' effects of a productivity improvement of 3% with the statistical criteria of a 5% two-tailed test and a 95% confidence level, about 3,134 observations would be required. If the signal to noise ratio is non-negligible, a larger sample would be essential to uncover the true effect of one factor. Given a response rate of 10%, a total of 31,000 mailings would be required. Given that this research is looking at two distinct populations, the mailing required would be doubled; such an effort is beyond the scope of this research.

Whilst agreeing with the concept of productivity, Williams (1998) and Kaydos (1999) point out that performance is the only means of measuring the direction and magnitude of change. There is no ultimate criterion of individual, organisational or national productivity. The most basic variable is performance, or what can the individual or firm *do*? (Campbell & Campbell, 1988). Productivity is a performance measure of a

production system - a system of various components, each of which can be characterised in terms of performance (Mahoney, 1990). The problem is that there is no single recipe nor methodology that will ensure success in implementing a performance measurement system. As Demery *et al* (1999) purport, performance measurement systems employ a variety of technologies, most 'homegrown', to provide accessible and usable information; this observation is corroborated by Sumanth (1998) who affirms that 80% of productivity measures are non-standard.

For the purpose of monitoring and improving performance, productivity measurement efforts should be concentrated on individual processes or functions. Kaydos (1999) believes that, if the productivity of the parts is taken care of, the whole will take care of itself; however, aggregate productivity measures should also be used to verify that the whole is reflecting the parts. Underdown & Associates (1999) admit that to have a complete picture of the company, productivity of individual processes and of functional departments, business units and the entire company must be measured. They also explain the difficulty in measuring the many factors involved and suggest substitute measures, such as actual cost compared to estimated cost to determine the extent of progress. If measures have to be customised to fit each situation, it follows that any survey instrument should accommodate the wide variety of possible responses. For the purpose of this research, an advantage in selecting first-line managers as respondents is that it allows for their perceived determination of the nature of the goal focus at the 'unit' level.

2.4.4 The Critical Role of Supervisors

The theme of human resource development keeps reappearing in conjunction with the role of management, with a fundamental element being the development of subordinates. The relevance of training and job related coaching are essential functions of first-line managers (Dyason, 1997; Tett *et al*, 2000; Caulcutt, 2001; Lubit, 2001). The McKinsey Global Institute (1999) explains that "a key factor is the development of employer-led training and the design process to suit particular levels of skills. Operational best practice is far more important than vocational training in generating high productivity. Managerial skills are crucial to the development and management of best practice operation. Management expertise relies — on the extent to which skills have been honed through the exposure to intense competition and best practices". It appears, therefore, that skills and abilities of business leaders to respond to current challenges are also critical to productivity improvement. Frank (1999) stresses that the ability of management to create an 'environment of inventiveness at work' is vital. The capability of management must not be overlooked as ways to boost performance are sought, an excellent example being Toyota. Spear & Bowen (1999) showed that workers and their supervisors needed to realise that the procedure employed in making changes was as important as the actual nature of the changes. Frontline workers make the improvements to their jobs and their supervisors provide direction and assistance as teachers. In other words, the techniques are not sufficient, management is implicit.

Emiliani (1998) makes a similar observation about lean manufacturing. To succeed, the behaviour of employees must change concurrently with changes in business processes, involving both intra- and inter-personal skills. The people dimension is as important as the technique. Maitland (1999) emphasises the importance of workers and their

characteristics as 'free agents', more loyal to their profession, motivated by challenging work, and shared leadership. An example relates to the cleaning services where, as MacCarthy (1999) purports, the move is to professionalise the industry and to create quality work which eventually results in a high level of productivity.

Alpander (1991) and Stanton (1993) declare that managers have a moral duty to help employees attain a true sense of self-fulfilment. Kompier & Cooper (1999) believe that productivity may improve through stress prevention, with a similar philosophy expounded within Deming's fourteen points, as reported by Aguayo (1990), including leadership. Drive out fear, remove barriers that rob people of pride of workmanship, put everybody in the company to work to accomplish the transformation, are just some of the points which involve leadership. Therefore, the role of first-line managers is to facilitate the process. Dealing with productivity, the importance of management is primordial. According to a survey of executives, poor management is the single greatest obstacle to productivity (LeBoeuf, 1982).

According to Kopelman (1986) and Mahoney (1990) and consistent with motivational theories, performance requires various management activities, such as goal specification, planning and analysis, monitoring, assessment and feedback. Cataline *et al* (1999) suggest that performance management, focused on results and backed by commitment, can deliver: clear articulated goals, understood expectations, valid information, recognition of contributions, as well as fair and equitable pay for performance. Best-practice organisations actively seek to align individual goals with corporate goals. The importance of having a clear understanding of the first-line managers' conception of goals is best illustrated by Harrington (1997); he points out that appropriate change must

occur in top, middle, as well as first-line managers and supervisors before the basic concepts are ever introduced to employees. He further states that 80% of today's organisational problems can only be solved by management. Lewis (1998) attributes the success of the UK food retailing sector as a world-class industry to four factors, two of which are of particular interest to this research: defined global best practices and leading the way in training, skill transfer and management development at every level.

2.4.5 The Implication of Values

Stainer (1995) relates how the Japanese Productivity Centre argues that, above all else, productivity is an attitude of mind. It is the mentality of progress and constant improvement. In the review of productivity by Aguayo (1991), the contrast is made between two fundamental philosophies, that of Taylor and Deming. In the Deming view, productivity and wealth come from the efforts of everyone and their harnessing of mind and management has to eliminate barriers for people to experience joy in their work, encouraging each to develop. In Taylor's view, productivity, wealth creation and improvement of the standard of living come from the management, organisation and machinery, which harness the brute force of individuals. However, as pointed out by Jenner (1998), the majority of corporations have functional, result oriented management. The organisation, its rules and structure are key, but the choice of outlook comes down to the question of values. It is important to note that the narrow definitions of productivity strictly focus on production outcome, while the broader ones include environmental factors, including human factors. Today, best-practice organisations are expanding the definition of productivity to include such factors as commitment to the organisation and motivation.

The need for a broader definition of productivity can be best illustrated by a number of examples. Morris (2000) relates the experience of a long time manager at Kodak; when he shifted his focus from managing results to investing time and attention in employees. they became more interested in their work, waste levels and overtime dropped significantly and productivity increased. Taylor (1997) recounts how Toyota hosts visits from competitors and explains the Toyota Production System (TPS) to their engineers and executive guests. Success, within the plant, depends on highly experienced managers working unselfishly with a motivated, well-trained work force. Toyota's assembly facilities in Kentucky have three operant management areas: techniques, systems, and philosophy (Kahn, 1997). In contrast, in a Chinese automotive plant, the equipment may be Japanese, the layout may be Japanese, but the production is far from being comparable. In the workplace, the soul and culture lacked fire, commitment. purpose; the difference was palpable.

Ritzen, (2000) underscores the ongoing process of developing within an organisation, a community of shared values, shared challenges and opportunities, based on a sense of trust, hope and reciprocity among all members. The measure of social cohesion includes three elements which infringe on performance and the first-line manager: (1) the sense of inclusiveness, trust, confidence, cooperation; (2) the construct of transparent, accountable and flexible public institutions for managing new forms of risk and reward, and (3) goals, as well as results, form part of a process to assure accountability.

These differences in philosophy do impact the management process, and more specifically the management development process. The Japanese, when recruiting, look for those who have the knack of getting people with diverse interests and viewpoints to

work together. Team-builders know how to create a situation where each individual works for both his own good and the good of the organisation (LeBoeuf, 1982). Appendix A provides further background about Japanese practices.

2.5 IN SUMMARY

The words productivity, performance and goals interlink. Whilst there is a general agreement on the overall concept of measurement of output over input, there is a wide range of outlook as to the causes in the changes in productivity/performance. Many differences can be attributed to the respective disciplines. Some opt to focus on specific units ranging from the individual to the organisation, whilst others adopt a broader scope such as nations as a whole or corporations. Thus, the operational definitions seem to vary. Certain features, such as the impact of human resources, the necessity for goals and accountability, the variety of possible measures, and the role of management, are all common features. This wide range of definitions and application underscores the need to obtain unfettered inputs from respondents. It follows that a survey instrument should accommodate the wide variety of possible responses. Because measurement at the ground level is desirable, the first-line managers appear to be the logical organisational level from which to ascertain the nature of goals, objectives and expectations.

CHAPTER 3

THE CONSTRUCTION OF

THE GENERIC PERFORMANCE MODEL

A preoccupation with the future only prevents us from seeing the present as it is but often prompts us to reorrange the post.
Eric Hoffer

3.0 PREAMBLE

The dynamics of improving productivity are complex. A clear understanding of premises, variables involved, desired outcomes and their interaction, is primary. Most organisations are not satisfied to know whether their productivity or performance has improved or declined; what they want is to be able to influence the outcome. It is, thus, intended to review models, in a number of disciplines, which relate to productivity/performance, in an attempt to identify the various factors which affect outcomes and ascertain the common factors which emanate from them.

Seven different types of models emerge. The first views management practices as evolutionary. The second assesses the use of economic models at the national level. The third is based upon the premise that culture is a major factor at play. The fourth explores the aspects of organisational behaviour and development as they impinge on performance and productivity. The fifth places a greater emphasis on the role self-efficacy plays in relation to performance and productivity. The last two types of models focus on the form of interaction between variables. One assumes a linear flow diagram where different features can be organised in a cause-and-effect sequence while the other acknowledges the symbiotic interaction which takes place between elements.

						Shared Key Attributes Mentioned				
MODELS	ASSERTIONS	MOTIVATION	MODELS	AUTHORS	UNIT MEASURED	ENVIRONMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS	GOALS	PERFORMANCE	RECOGNITION FEEDBACK	TRAINING
Evolutionary	Management techniques evolve and thus improve performance	Appliestion of new techniques result in improvement in performance	Chronological	Buchanan (1996) Gibson & Tesone (2001)	General	—	Implicit	Implicit	Implicit	Implicit
Economic	Complex interaction of economic factors affect productivity	Explore variables at the macro level	Theoretical	Conference Board of Canada (1999a) Freedman (1989)	Macro	Explicit	Implicit	Explicit	Explicit	E
Cultural	The adoption of managerial practices are contingent upon cultural distinctives, thus eventually affect performance and productivity	Adoption of practices are either facilitated or impeded by culture thus affecting improvement in performance	Semi Theoretical Data Empirical	Hofstede (1983) Kotter & Heskett (1992) Deane (1988) Lussier (1999)	Macro	E	—	—	—	—
Organisational Behaviour	All sources of change including productivity, have as its root human intervention	Organisational performance is improved by	Theoretical	Davis (1989) Kopelman et al (1990)	Macro	E	E	E	E	I
Cause-and-Effect	A limited number of areas interact with the eventual outcome of productivity	Changes in various areas of the models affect performance	Theoretical	Lincoln & Kalleberg (1990) Locke & Latham (1990) Thierry (1996)	Macro	E	E	E	E	E
Symbiotic	Different factors, studied by various disciplines, interact in complex ways affecting performance and productivity	A holistic approach is required	Theoretical	Champagne & McAfee (1989) Sumanth (996)	Macro	E	I	E	E	E
Self-Efficacy	The lowest common denominator in performance and productivity is the actual contribution at the individual's level	Improvement in self-efficacy as well as other factors affect individual performance and productivity	Empirical	Phillips & Gully (1997) Reun & Fedor (2001) VandeWalle et al (2001)	Employee Specific	E	E	E	E	E

Table 3.1 Illustrative Models of Performance Management

As a result of comparing these various models (Table 3.1), common attributes were identified. These were taken into consideration in the development of the Generic Performance Model and of the survey instrument employed in this research.

3.1 EVOLVING MANAGEMENT PARADIGMS

It is important to recognise that management is an evolving process and that the paradigms change over time. As Buchanan (1996) illustrates, managers do not necessarily discard the past, but a metamorphosis into a new form or new dimension takes place. Table 3.2 exhibits, chronologically, such management paradigms. Each paradigm is associated with specific techniques advocated by organisations which championed the concepts to address a specific management need. Many of these paradigms are in the context of changing organisational practices. As can be seen, the last column shows the various management techniques which have come to be associated with the overarching paradigm. They all share the fundamental of improving productivity.

Whilst the management process evolves, the challenge is to recognise the principles which will last, differentiating them from fads that will prove short-lived and, in some instances, counter-productive. Although these techniques may constitute a snapshot at a certain period of time (Olson & Aase, 2002), they do not reflect the overall management practices but describe an insight being implemented across organisations.

NOMENCLATURE	TECHNOLOGIES	EXEMPLAR	PRODUCT MARKET CHARACTERISTICS	LABOUR MARKET CHARACTERISTICS	ORGANISATIONAL FORM	PARADIGM
Taylorism 1910	Mauldslay Lathe Tool for task	Bethlehem Steel	Standard products, mass markets	In USA, immigrant, unskilled, low level of literacy	Hierarchical, mechanistic, bureaucratic, factory as machine, worker as component, pay as only motivator	• Task analysis and fragmentation • work study • line balancing
Fordism 1920	Assembly line	Ford	Growth of consumerism			
Human relations 1950	Increased automation Assembly line	Hawthorn IBM	Further mass market growth Increasing customer sophistication	Increased education and affluence raise expectations of Quality of Work Life. Rejection of short-cycle unskilled tasks.	Hierarchical and divisionalised. Use of job enrichment and autonomous teams. Human-centred work design	• participative supervision • counselling • job enrichment • variance analysis • S-T-S design
Socio-technical systems 1960	Continuous process Further automation	Volvo Kalmar Uddevalla				
World class manufacturing 1970	NC-CNC-DNC CAD – CAM	Digital	Global product competition. Threat from Pacific Rim Rapid change in consumer ways	Growth of unemployment in developed economies; increasing marginalization of trade unions	Delayed, down-sized, project based Lean and mean focused factories, quality improvement teams	• DFM • RQM • JIT • MRP • Quality Teams • Continuous improvement
Lean production	CIM Robotics	Toyota				
Agile manufacturing 1990	CIM	(Lehigh University, Iacocca Institute)	Wide and deep IT penetration Innovations in materials Mass specialization	Spectre of chronic unemployment combined with skills shortages in key areas Development of strategic Human Resource Management Decline of collectivism and rise of individualism	The virtual enterprise: coalitions around ideas	• core process identification • factory/enterprise modeling • process innovation • BPA • BPR • model driven life cycle engineering • improved infrastructure • underlying formalisms
Manufacturing systems engineering 1990		Lucas Rolls Royce			Group technology, product autonomy, cellular manufacture	
Business process re-engineering 1990		(Fraunhoffer Institute, Stuttgart)			Fractal factory, endlessly reorganising, decentralised, empowered work teams Worker as responsive problem-solver	

Source: Buchanan (1996)

Table 3.2 Chronology of Management Paradigms

Gibson & Tesone (2001) suggest that techniques such as MBO, Sensitivity Training, quality circles, Total Quality Management and Self-Managed Teams exhibit the life-cycle patterns of management fads as relatively transitory collective beliefs, disseminated by management fashion setters. However, techniques are often equated with performance and productivity because of the desired outcome associated with them. As productivity and performance are descriptive of overall operations, any specific technique, such as Just-in-Time (JIT), fails to be comprehensive but addresses only one specific need.

The application of individual management techniques is fraught with potential problems when applied incrementally. In a survey of 475 global firms, Bain & Co have determined that the percent of companies using specified management tools has been declining by as much as 50% in the past few years; the main reason is that executives are too busy making sense of the new economy (*The Economist*, 2000). Such findings also illustrate the faddish propensity (Gibson & Tesone, 2001) or programme du jour (Olson & Aase, 2002) and the superficiality in the implementation of management techniques.

If techniques had truly become part of the management process, their usage should have continued unabated; they have, as their principal objective, the improvement of productivity/performance. Short-comings are not due to the features of the techniques but in the failure to recognise the complexity of the implementation process, as well as the human and organisational dynamics involved (*The Financial Post*, 1994). Capelli & Newmark (2001) found that high-performance work practices have very little effect on overall labour efficiency measured as output per dollar spent on labour. They also acknowledge the difficulties in assessing the impact of high-performance work practices

as the confounding effect of many variables make such analysis difficult. Performance management, high-performance work organisations and high-performance practices imply that the link between the work practices and performance has been proved. It is still subject to debate if the link has been established (Ashton & Sung, 2002). The attitude of overlaying techniques often ignores the existing managerial practices of an organisation and implementation difficulties as outlined by Beer *et al* (1990) and Mestre (1999).

The various management techniques shown in table 3.2 are just a small list of a plethora of such tools aiming to improve performance and productivity. The issues raised about the virtues of such techniques underscore the importance of implementation, namely goals, training, performance tracking and recognition.

3.2 THE ECONOMIC MODEL

A comprehensive economic framework for analysing Canada's performance and potential (Figure 3.1), as presented by The Conference Board of Canada (1999a), illustrates the inter-connectedness of the factors involved in the whole process of productivity/performance at the national level. Starting with existing conditions in the areas of physical capital, technology and innovation, human resources, natural resources and social capital, these factors lead to organisational performance and productivity, which ultimately affect the goal of a high and sustainable quality of life. Parallel to these interactions are the government policies and global trends, resulting in some form of possible comparative advantage, and the ability to compete in world markets. In turn, each of the components of the model could be expanded to reflect the various specifics of the disciplines and variables involved.

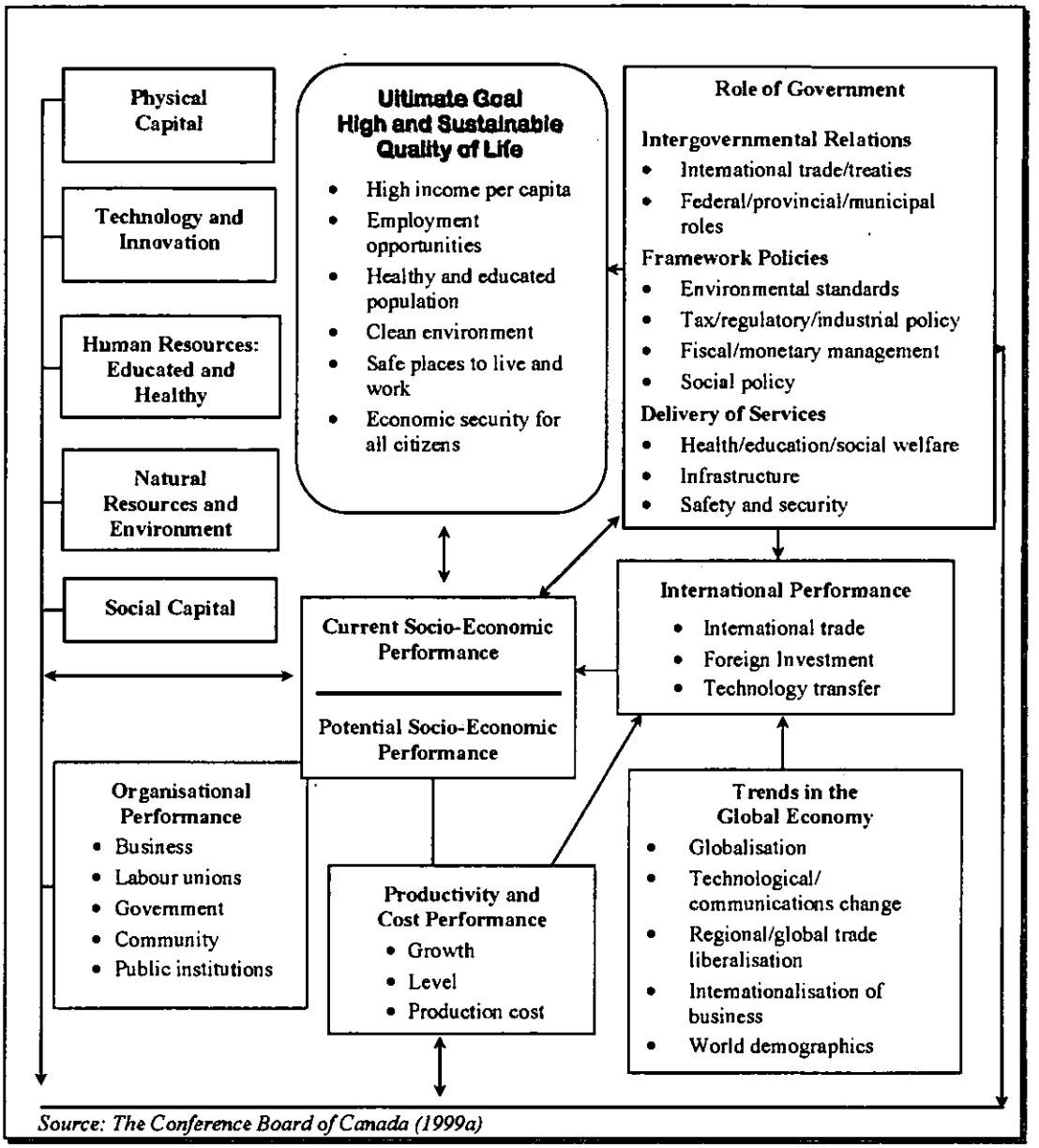


Figure 3.1 A Framework for Analysing Canada's Performance and Potential

This model illustrates the many intricacies which affect productivity and eventually quality of life. The model proffered by Freedman (1989) propounds that the standard of living of a country measured as a ratio of Gross Domestic Product per person, is a function of the amount of work hours being spent and the amount of output being generated (Figure 2.1 in section 2.1). To raise the amount of productivity, both capital

and human resource investment are factors implied in the equation. As policies move into implementation, the management of human factors becomes a key component. An effective and efficient workplace is crucial to national productivity. Both of these models share similar building blocks, namely goals of raising productivity and performance, the training and development of human resources, as well as tracking mechanisms to assess performance and the recognition.

3.3 CULTURAL MODELS

Because of the globalisation of industrial activity and the number of global corporate ventures in the form of transplants, joint ventures, and subsidiaries, 'cultural' differences must be considered. As far as Schein (1997) is concerned, productivity is a cultural phenomenon par excellence, both at the small-work-group level and at the level of the total organisation. He explains that the concept of culture ties in with productivity and is applicable in scope from small groups to national entities. If productivity is a cultural phenomenon, it becomes an important factor when comparing responses and addressing goals, from first-line managers of two different countries.

3.3.1 Definitions

Culture is inescapable, but must be defined. Joynt & Warner (1996) define it as a "collective programming of the mind", "collective soul" or some type of "social glue" that holds people together. Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1998) states that it is difficult to understand why individuals and organisations act as they do without considering the meanings they attribute to their environment. Harris & Johnson (1999) provide a more classical definition: it is a learned, socially acquired tradition and life-

style of the members of a society, including their patterned, repetitive ways of thinking, feeling and acting. Productivity, when broadly defined, includes sociological and psychological factors as reflected by culture, motivation, group interaction and many other dimensions. "Culture is a shared system of meanings. It dictates what we pay attention to, how we act and what we value. Culture organises such values into what Geert Hofstede calls 'mental programs'" (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner, 1998). These definitions, however, do not specify the scope of applicability, be it at the national, corporate or unit size level.

3.3.2 The Bimodal Nature of Culture

According to Joynt & Warner (1996), there are two main approaches towards the application of culture: divergency and convergency. Divergency suggests that elements, such as differing values and behaviours, generate diversity. By contrast, convergency suggests that, because of technology and globalisation, the universal adoption of 'one best way' approach to management can overshadow national cultural differences. As pointed out by Francesco & Gold (1998), culture at the national level and culture at the organisational level – corporate culture – are two very different phenomena (Table 3.3) and the use of a common term for both is confusing; precisely how national culture affects organisational culture is not yet clear. A third category, an integrative perspective, recognises that corporate culture is portable but needs to be contextualised. Each of these various aspects of culture are explored in the following three sections.

AREA OF EMPHASIS	AUTHORS	MAIN FEATURE
National Culture	Hofstede (1983) Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1998) Deane (1998)	National culture is the critical element in the selection and effectiveness of management practices.
Corporate Culture	Kotter & Heskett (1992) Brown (1995) McShane (1998) Francesco & Gold (1998)	The culture of a corporate or any subunit, can supersede the affects of national culture.
Integrative Perspective	Joynt & Warner (1996) Williams (1998) Lussier (1999) Hoffman (1999)	Corporate cultures are portable but need to be contextualised.

Table 3.3 Bimodal Nature of Culture

3.3.2.1 Organisational Culture

Each organisation has its own culture. McShane (1998) sees organisational culture as the basic pattern of shared assumptions, values and beliefs which govern the way employees within an organisation think about and act on, problems and opportunities. Similarly, Brown (1995) determines it as the pattern of beliefs, values and learned ways of coping with experience that have developed during the course of an organisation's history, tending to be manifested in material arrangement and behaviour of its members. The terms employed are, thus, not dissimilar to those utilised to describe culture in general. It seems that the question is not so much one of using the same word to describe two different concepts, but rather of clarifying the dependency of one on the other.

To further compound the confusion, the term 'performance culture' has also been employed and its meaning, as far as Williams (1998) is concerned, is far from being clear. Armstrong (1995) associates performance management with a particular set of values, where values are one of the key building blocks of culture. All, while using different words, seem to agree on the general concept; however, as in the case of

productivity, agreement on the concept does not assure agreement on the applications or implications.

3.3.2.2 National Culture

The second area of culture is related to national, ethnic differences. In a study interviewing managers in 50 countries to ascertain differences in national cultures. Hofstede (1983) establishes four dimensions that can be used to describe the cultural differences:

1) Individualism versus Collectivism;
2) Large or Small Power Distances;
3) Strong or Weak Uncertainty Avoidance; and
4) Masculinity vs Femininity.

Similarly, Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1998) and Dean (1998) take the point of view that managerial practices are difficult to export or transfer to other cultures. In his comparison of Western and Japanese roots, Dean (1998) expresses the belief that national culture is a major component in the difference between Japanese and Canadian management practices (Figure 3.2). The difference in individualism of Western society, contrasted with the groupism of Japanese culture, has its roots in religious beliefs which, in turn, affect values. Values derived from religion and applied to organisational practices foster different responses in management values. Without taking issue with the selection of these characteristics as to their relative importance, the underlying conceptual areas of sociology, psychology and organisational development provide further features.

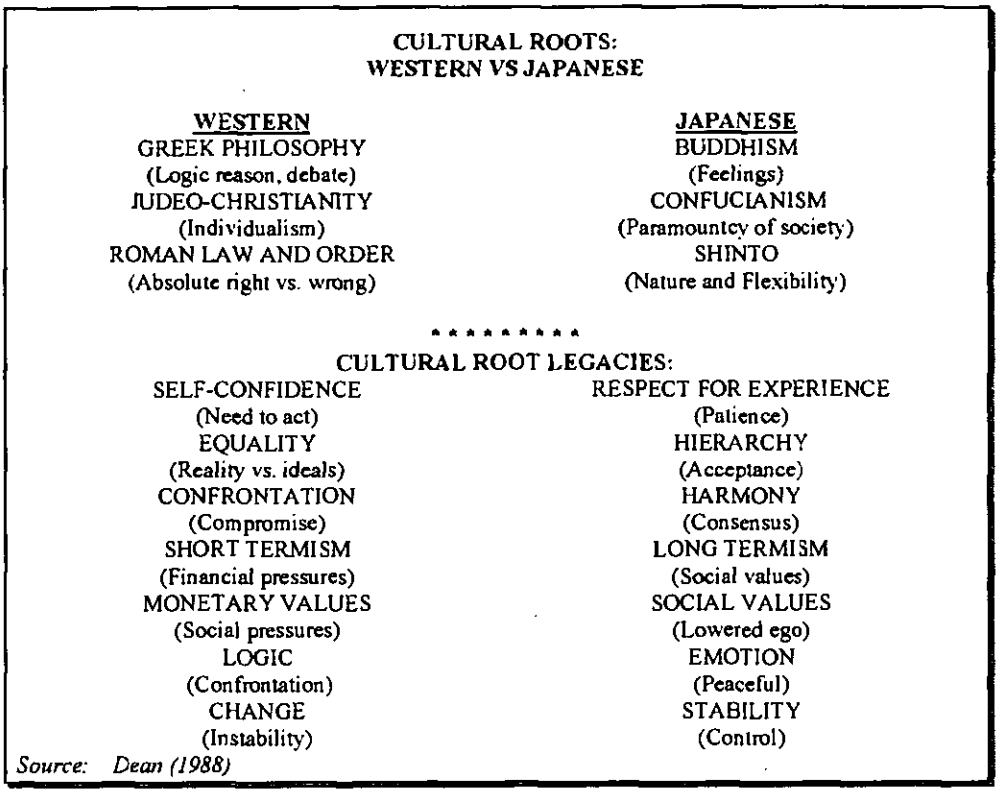


Figure 3.2 Culture and Management Practices

The rationale of cultural differences and their influence on productivity can be misused, resulting in the failure to identify the root causes of the inability to change. The first natural tendency, as Schein (1977) propounds, is to label any differences as cultural and to rely on our intuitive understanding. An example relates to change vs. stability; this seems inconsistent with the *kaizen* concept of continual improvement and the root cause could be attributed to management practices.

3.3.2.3 An Integrative Perspective

In the debate of the two distinct views about culture and performance management, Williams (1998) states that the latter must fit with the former and the other is that performance management is a means of cultural change. Yet, Francesco & Gold (1998)

acknowledge that "some theorists see little, if any, relationship between national and corporate culture and argue that a 'logic of industrialisation' affects all organisations the same way. Organisational culture and structure form and operate independently of local or national culture". Therefore, the pivotal question for managers is to ask what is more important: is it the transfer of behaviours and techniques from country to country in a more uniform world, or is it the need to recognise cultural diversity (Joynt & Warner, 1996)? Different 'cultural practices' could influence or explain differences in the managerial process and, hence, performance. The term 'cultural practices' is in quotes to indicate the imprecision of what is truly cultural as compared to different managerial practices, which can be emulated in other parts of the world.

With the trend toward a global economy and supporting the convergency view of culture, businesses are developing global business cultures which they view as a competitive advantage (Lussier, 1999). One such example is the automotive industry. Organisations, such as Nissan UK (Wickens, 1987), NUMMI which is Toyota-General Motors joint venture (Pfeffer 1998; Hoffman, 1999), Saturn (Kochan, 1996), and Renault (Greif, 1991), are all plants with a non-Japanese culture; however, by adopting the Japanese management philosophy, they have proven that certain management practices can be successfully adapted under different settings. Each transformed its respective operations into powerful production machines. These successes demonstrate that culture is crucial, at a more basic level, such as at the corporate or even plant level. This difference in perspective is key to this research when ascribing the differences in responses to national culture or management practices.

Chew & Putti (1995) point out that the concept of culture in social sciences has been defined in so many ways that no consensus has emerged. Because of the difficulties in definitions, this research limits itself to acknowledge the distinction between national culture and corporate culture, identifying key factors contributing to the nature of culture to be considered in the development of the survey instrument.

3.3.3 Corporate Practices in the Context of Corporate Culture

Corporate culture is the result of corporate practices. It is promulgated through hiring practices, selection processes, orientation of new recruits, development of personnel, training and other corporate activities. These practices would be reinforced by criteria for pay raises and promotion as they reflect the values held by the organisation. Schein (1996) believes that culture is a learned product of group experience and is, therefore, to be found only where there is a definable group with a significant history. Several cultures could be operating within the larger social unit, namely the organisation.

When examining the development of factors or criteria to compare cultures, Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner (1996) use seven criteria:

(a) relationship between employees

(b) attitude to authority

(c) ways of thinking and learning

(d) attitude towards people

(e) ways of changing

(f) ways of motivating and rewarding

(g) criticism and conflict resolution.

These measures acknowledge the broad span of practices which affect corporate practices. Kopelman *et al* (1990) show, in their model of climate, culture and productivity, that societal culture is just one of the areas affecting productivity with organisational culture as a subset (Figure 3.3). According to the convergency theory, the two should probably be shown as tangential. The four elements of human resources management practices, organisational climate, cognitive and affective states as well as salient organisational behaviours should probably be shown as being part of moulding organisational culture. This model shows a linear relationship without any interaction between the different factors. The two elements pertinent to this research are that both are organisational climate and salient organisational behaviours as they both include goal emphasis and performance respectively, resulting in organisational productivity.

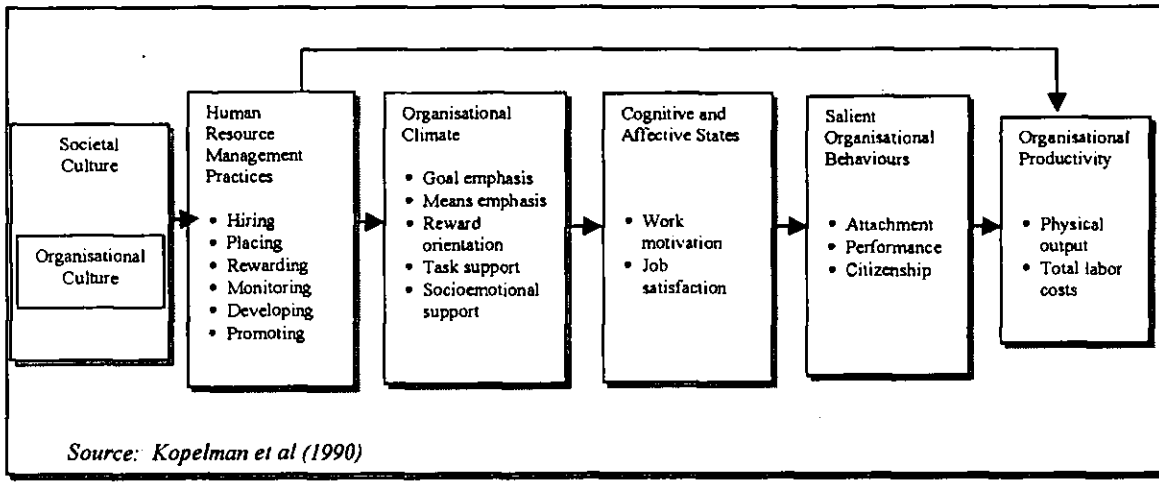


Figure 3.3 A Model of Climate, Culture and Productivity

Top management values, which affect organisational behaviour and results, are ultimately reflected in culture. Kotter & Heskett (1992) place culture as a resultant of the management process, thus reversing the cause-effect relationship (Figure 3.4). They do acknowledge that corporate culture can have a significant impact on a firm's long-term

economic performance; but it is like the proverbial question: which came first, the chicken or the egg?

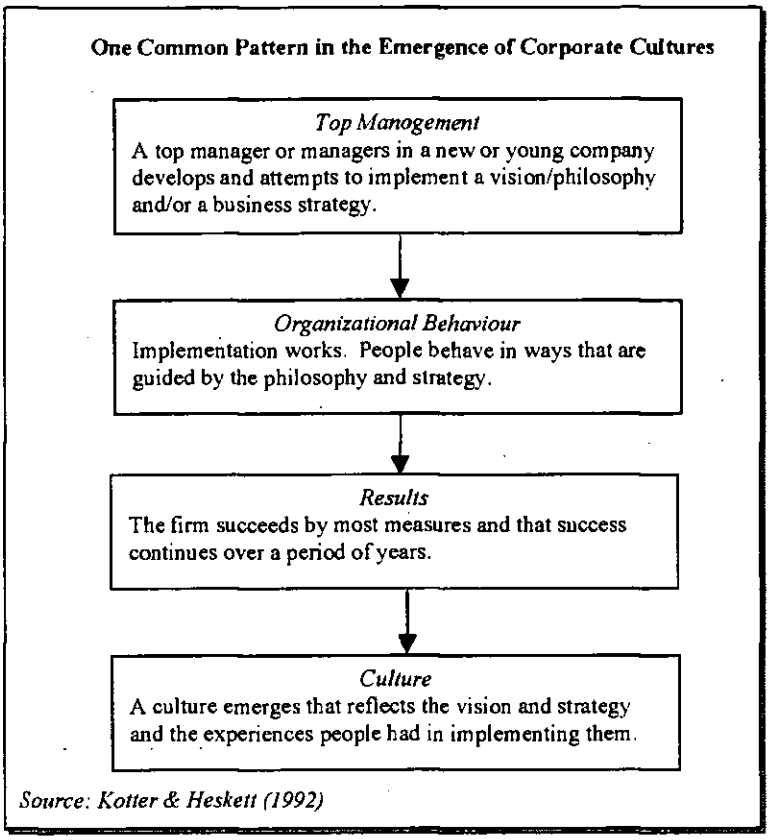


Figure 3.4 Culture: Cause or Effect?

The results actually achieved by the organisation serve as part of the feedback loop, either affirming present practices or triggering off the search for alternatives. Figure 3.5, which examines the creation of a performance enhancing culture, illustrates the same principle but divides culture into two components: values and behavioural practices where values are less tangible and, therefore, difficult to change. Behaviour norms, on the other hand, are easier to change through actual practices – action speaks louder than words.

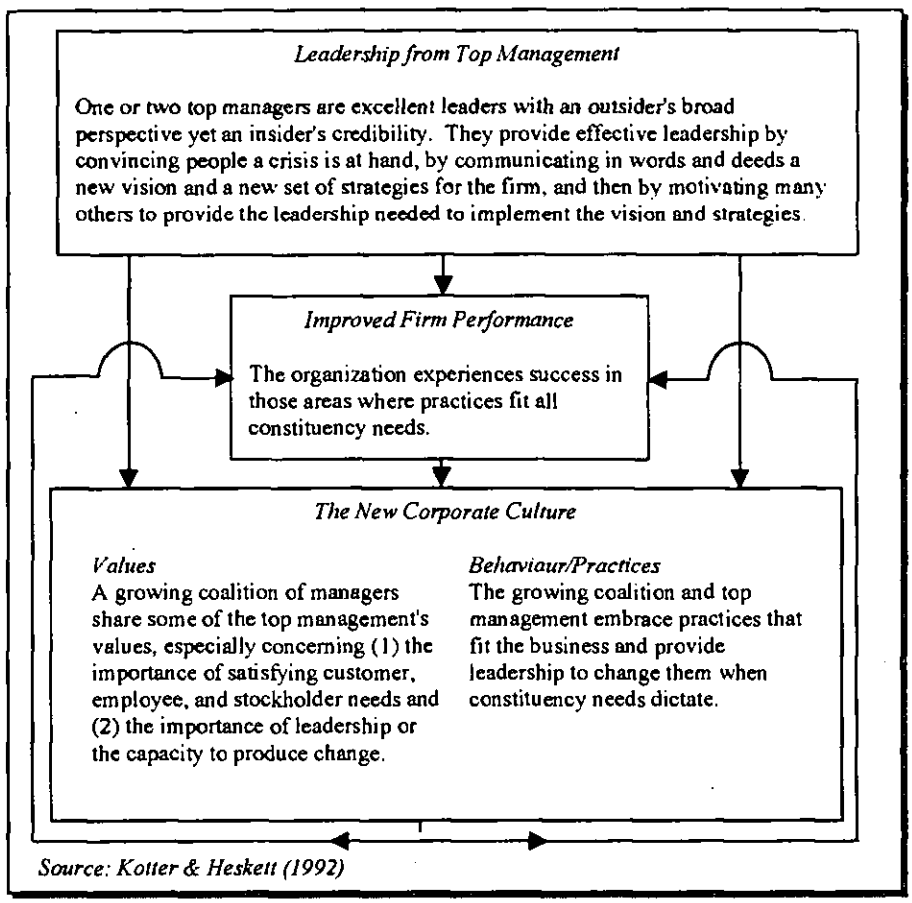


Figure 3.5 The Creation of a Performance Enhancing Culture

In the analysis of corporate culture, the context in which the corporation operates is a segment of the equation which attempts to identify key factors affecting results. Such factors, as competition and customers, are part of that context where values are the response to the needs of the different constituencies. It seems that the linear model has been expanded to acknowledge the impact of forces, both internal and external to the organisation. A great deal of emphasis has been given in the last few decades, according to Schein (1997), to the process of occupational and organisational socialisation, but much less effort has gone into describing the actual content. The Hay Group (2002), Hofstede (1993) and Trompenaars (1998) have developed scales to assess differences in

corporate cultures without establishing which factors might have contributed to these attributes. These cultural differences address certain characteristics, but fail to show if these differences translate into various means to achieve higher levels of productivity. In other words, are these different characteristics translating into different practices, or do managerial practices supersede these characteristics? Given the experience of multinationals, the issue of national culture does not seem to be an impediment to best practices.

While the issue of precedence between corporate and national culture is open to debate, the models advanced by the various camps acknowledge the importance of goals, training, recognition and feedback in an effort to affect performance (Kopelman et al, 1990; Kotter & Heskett, 1992). Hence, as Francesco & Gold (1998) assert, one way to understand an organisation's culture is to ask people how they get work done in an organisation. This research, through the use of open questions, aims to provide an insight as to the nature of the factors at play, from the respondent's point of view. The responses should reflect some aspects of culture and management practices. However, these cultural perspectives are helpful in identifying factors which are key in developing a performance culture and, thus, affect productivity.

3.4 ORGANISATIONAL BEHAVIOUR THEORIES

It seems that two distinct types of models are possible: one to focus on human resource practices employed by the organisation and the other to consider the issue from motivational dimensions of individuals.

3.4.1 Human Resources

The model proposed by Kopelman *et al* (1990), as already considered, identifies not only cultural differences but also the importance of human resource management practices, organisational climate, cognitive and affective states, and salient organisational behaviour (Figure 3.3). Davis (1989) points out that the role of organisational behaviour in work systems is not to be downplayed. He believes that it must be recognised that the fulfilment of human needs is contingent on the ability of the organisation to assess the needs and provide ways and means of meeting same, namely organisational productivity (Figure 3.6). The phenomenon of productivity should only be studied in relationship to the human element.

Knowledge	x	Skill	=	Ability
Attitude	x	Situation	=	Motivation
Ability	x	Motivation	=	Potential Human Performance
Potential Human Performance }	x	Resources	=	Organisational Productivity

Source: Davis (1989)

Figure 3.6 Organisational Productivity

However, Figure 3.6 can be modified to show the objective of organisational productivity as the starting point (Figure 3.7). The eventual dependence upon attitude, knowledge and skills of individuals underscore the importance of situational factors.

Organisational Productivity	=	Potential Human Performance	x	Resources
Potential Human Performance	=	Ability	x	Motivation
Motivation	=	Attitude	x	Situation
Ability	=	Knowledge	x	Skill

Figure 3.7 Modified Organisational Productivity

As can be seen in the modified version, organisational productivity is, to a great extent, the result of the organisation's efforts to maximise and enhance human performance with adequate resources. Both skill and situation are factor of corporate practices in the form of human resource development and the organisational climate.

3.4.2 Motivational Dimensions

Motivation is clearly part of the organisational productivity equation. Different disciplines have characterised humankind in similar ways. In anthropology, Malinowski (1954) has outlined three fundamental needs:

(a) Biological needs, such as food;
(b) Instrumental needs, such as justice and education;
(c) Integrative needs, such as art and religion

These needs are compared with those of other motivational theories by Maslow (1970), Alderfer (1972) and Herzberg (1987) (Figure 3.8).

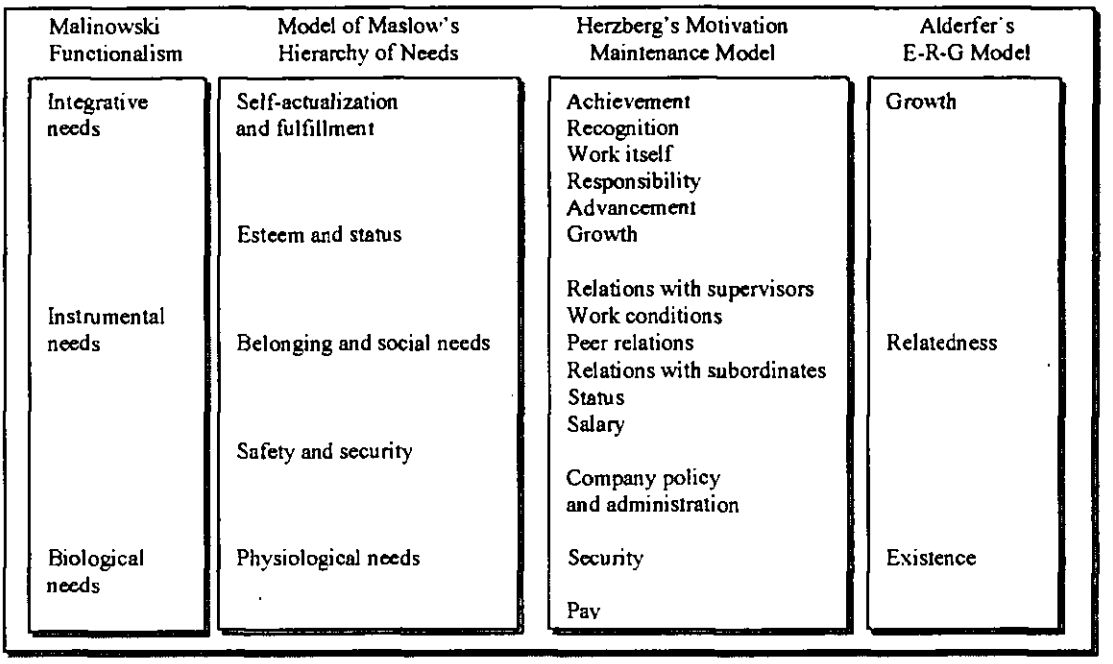


Figure 3.8 Comparison of Motivational Models

Three areas of concern are promulgated: opportunity for self-fulfilment, social interaction and basic needs; these in turn, are a rendition of what Kopelman *et al* (1990) label cognitive and affective states as well as salient organisational behaviour.

Herzberg's (1987) two-factor or hygiene factor theory is particularly interesting (Figure 3.9). He underscores the individual's need for achievement, recognition, the satisfaction found in performing the work, and a sense of responsibility as major satisfiers, with company policy and quality of interaction with supervision as major sources of frustration. Similar findings are reported in the *Wall Street Journal* (1993), with four of the top five concerns being: open communication 65%, nature of work 59%, management quality 59% and supervision 58%. Among human resource management elements, Shellenbarger (1998) points to employees' attitudes about workload and treatment by bosses as having a measurable effect on revenue. He quotes an executive

stating that, "We know employee satisfaction does increase productivity for us." Greene (1975) stresses the reciprocal nature of influence between leader and subordinate, the leader's considerate behaviour causes subordinate satisfaction, and the follower's performance causes changes in the leader's emphasis in the performance behaviour relationship; the symbiotic interaction takes place between superior and subordinate.

These models seem to focus on explaining human performance but fail to closely link the management process and outcomes in terms of productivity/performance. Yet, Herzberg (2003) points out that at the core of motivation are goals that are hard to reach, responsibilities and achievement, and recognition in conjunction with a positive work environment. With the implicit objective to improve performance and productivity, these same variables can be found in the models previously discussed. McShane and Travaglione (2003) suggest a model which includes motivation, ability, role perception, as well as situational factors interacting and resulting in performance. Thus, a model must be developed to incorporate both the individual human dimension as well as the organisational needs and practices in relation to productivity/performance.

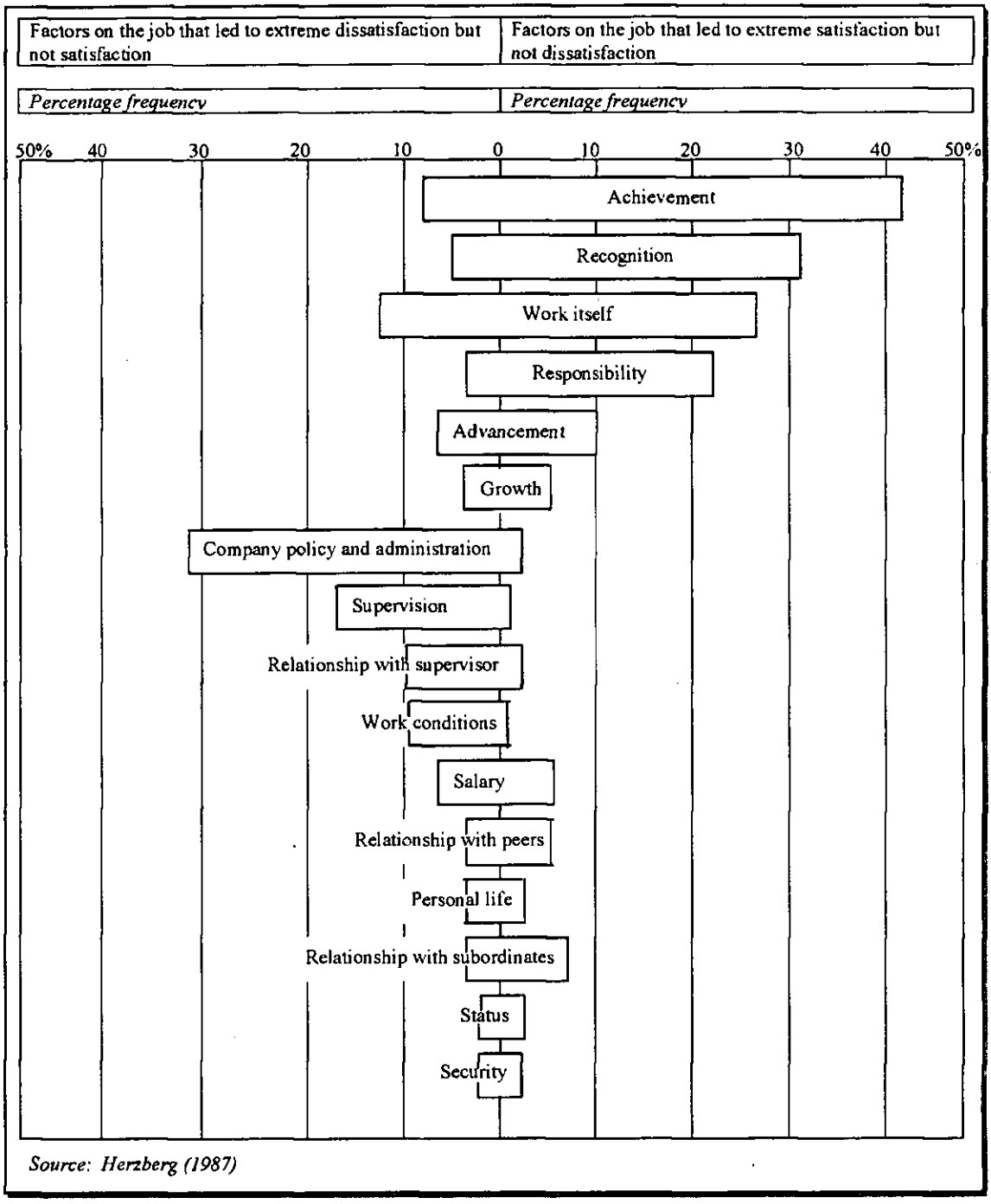


Figure 3.9 Two-Factor or Hygiene Factor Theory

Moved this section up

3.5 THE SELF-EFFICACY MODELS

Self-efficacy models study the productivity/performance phenomenon with the specific focus on the human predispositions which might affect outcomes. Schunk (1999) defines 'self-efficacy' as a personal judgement of how well one can execute the course of action required to deal with situations. Bandura (1986) perceives it as the belief of one possessing skills and capabilities to achieve a certain level of performance acquired through vicarious or direct experiences; he suggests that human functioning involves the interaction between behavioural, environmental and personal variables. Similar to the model by Sumanth (1996), the triadic model suggested by Schunk (1999) depicts the interaction between social influences, achievement outcomes and self-influences, such as self-efficacy. Three models and key elements, which have been identified by self-efficacy research as affecting performance, are reviewed in the following sections.

3.5.1 Three Typical Self-Efficacy Models

Three models are proffered which are typical of self-efficacy research. The simplest is the Hypothesised Feedback-Based Model suggested by Renn & Fedor (2001); it is shown in an abbreviated version (Figure 3.10) and illustrates the linkage between feedback and self-efficacy, with both, in turn, affecting goals which, eventually, lead to output.

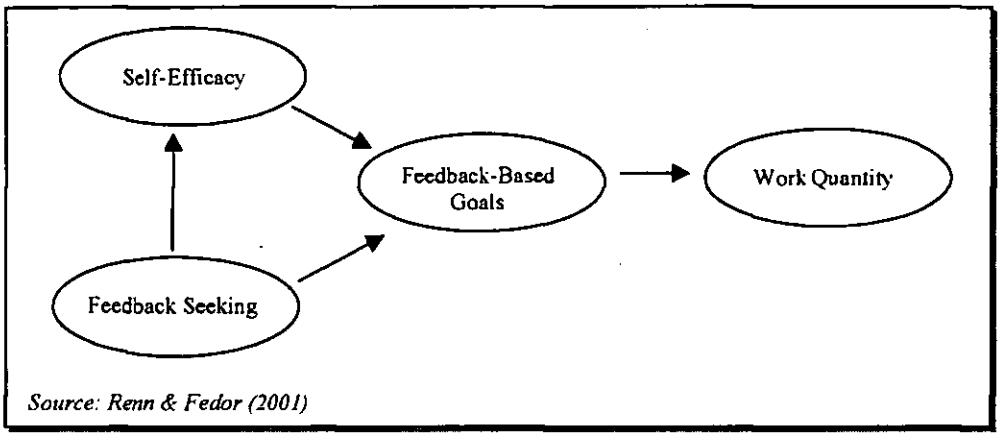


Figure 3.10 Hypothesised Feedback-Based Model (Abbreviated version)

Goal orientation is defined as a mental framework for individuals to interpret and respond to achievement situation (Brett & VandeWalle, 1999). VandeWalle *et al* (2001) suggest a mediated goal orientation model, also shown in an abbreviated version (Figure 3.11); it points out that past experience influences effort, self-efficacy and goal's level of difficulty.

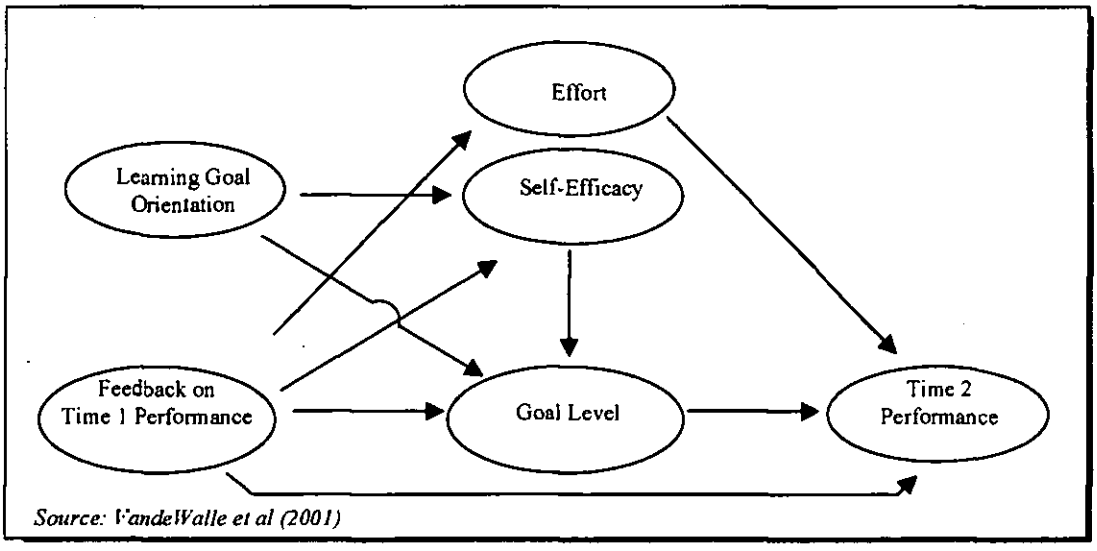


Figure 3.11 Mediated Goal Orientation Model (Abbreviated version)

Various degrees of abstraction, or greater degrees of scrutiny in areas of special interest, are possible. For example, in their theoretical model, Phillips & Gully (1997) explore elements affecting the perception of self-efficacy such as liability, learning and performance goal orientation (Figure 3.12).

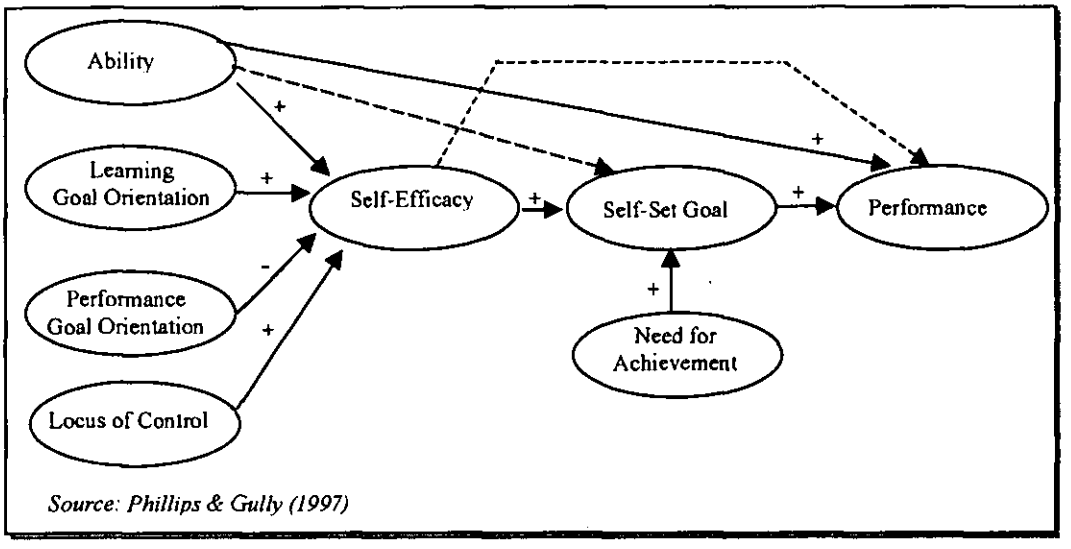


Figure 3.12 Theoretical Model

The three exhibited models share the same building blocks of goal-setting, performance and feedback as those already described, as well as the new element of self-efficacy. They all use the same definition of goals as measurable outcome targets which, when accomplished, are referred to as performance or work quantity.

3.5.2 The Influence of Goals on Self-Efficacy

Changes in volume/output are used as one of the yardsticks to ascertain the effect of different self-efficacy factors in goals (Bandura, 1986, 1997; Wiley, 1995; Nicholson, 1995; Phillips & Gully, 1997; Vancouver, 1997; Shea & Howell, 1998; Gardner & Pierce, 1998; Stajkovic & Luthans, 1998; Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 1999; Steele-

Johnson *et al*, 2000; Vancouver *et al*, 2001; Lord & Brown, 2001; Renn & Fedor, 2001). Moreover, it is important to appreciate (1) the effect of past performance on goal setting and (2) the sense of self-efficacy (Vancouver, 1997, 2001; Zimmerman & Kitsantas, 1999). Assigned goals influence both self-efficacy and personal goals which, in turn, have a direct effect on performance (Early & Lituchy, 1991). Goals are an integral part of the self-efficacy dynamics.

3.5.3 Supervisor's Influence on Self-Efficacy

The influence of first-line managers is brought to light (Bandura, 1986; Early & Lituchy, 1991; Shea & Howell, 1998; Schunk, 1999; Lord & Brown, 2001; Vancouver *et al*, 2001) and, as Latham *et al* (1988) propound, "Influencing self-efficacy is a likely indicator of supervisory supportiveness". Shea & Howell (1998), in their analysis of self-efficacy, stress the importance of modelling and transformational leadership behaviours as conveying and building confidence in employees' abilities to meet high performance expectations. Renn & Fedor (2001) show the strong link between feedback, goals and work quantity whilst Schunk (1999) also finds that the combination of process-goal plus feedback is most effective in establishing self-efficacy. Moreover, Latham *et al* (1988) have identified that the way instructions are given in conveying goals do affect self-efficacy and outcomes. Lord & Brown (2001) link leadership not only to values but also to behaviour and goals of subordinates. It is quite conclusive, therefore, that supervisors play an important role in the various activities of goal setting.

3.5.4 Training and Self-Efficacy

Several of the activities associated with supervisors have to do with the enhancement of competency and the training of subordinates. As such, goal orientation, in the main, is concerned with demonstrating competence by seeking favourable, or avoiding negative, judgements (Brett & VandeWalle, 1999). The issue, on one hand, deals with the need of subordinates and, on the other, presumes the ability of the supervisor in performing this function. Hence, the role of a leader is important especially working with inexperienced employees requiring substantial skill development. Training leaders on the concept of incremental training programmes can enhance leadership effectiveness for managing subordinates (VandeWalle, 2001). It is said that performance and self-efficacy can be enhanced through ability (Early & Lituchy, 1991; Phillips & Gully, 1997) and training (Schunk, 1999). The success of the learner often depends on the ability of the supervisor.

3.5.5 Recommendations Derived from Self-Efficacy Research

In defining intellectual capital as the product of competence and commitment, Ulrich (1998) underscores that human resources represent a firm's only appreciable asset. As such, Gardner & Pierce, (1998) propose that organisations should not only provide employees with clear roles and organisational support, but also equip them with the skills and abilities that will contribute to effective performance; this would strengthen their specific, task-based self-efficacy. Schunk (1999) points out that learning begins with observational acquisition of knowledge and proceeds through its emulative use, internalised self-control and self-regulated adaptation. As Early & Lituchy (1991) explain, "Perhaps more important, is the utility of helping employees develop self-assessment skills so that their self-efficacy expectations are consistent with their abilities.

The results of such a congruity should be the establishment of appropriate personal goals, and, as a result, optimal work performance". Therefore, the primary function of first-line managers is to focus on the process of making subordinates successful. The results of these studies illustrate the implicit dichotomy which exists between goals as an end point in terms of output, project completion or aspirations, and a process by which targets are best met (Shah & Higgins, 1997). The symbiotic interaction which takes place between the various entities involved requires a comprehensive model.

3.6 CHOICE OF MODEL CONFIGURATION

New Title

While models in the previous sections have been catalogued on the basis of their content such as motivational, cultural or self-efficacy, an alternative is to classify models on the basis of the nature of the interaction between variables as either linear or symbiotic. The implication, from a research point of view, is that, if the interaction is linear, the cause and effect can be more readily determined than if the interaction between variables is symbiotic, where the analysis is more difficult as the interaction confounds the results.

3.6.1 Linear Models of Productivity/Performance

New Reading

In order to describe the type of interaction between various factors affecting productivity/performance, a number of models have been proffered. Lincoln & Kalleberg (1990) have constructed a multi-level model of work organisation and work attitudes (Figure 3.13). They start with the external factor of industry, proceeding to the environmental factors of organisational structure and job attributes, which, when combined with the characteristics of employee background and work values, culminate

into work attitudes. The linear nature of the model ignores many of the interactions which can take place between the variables.

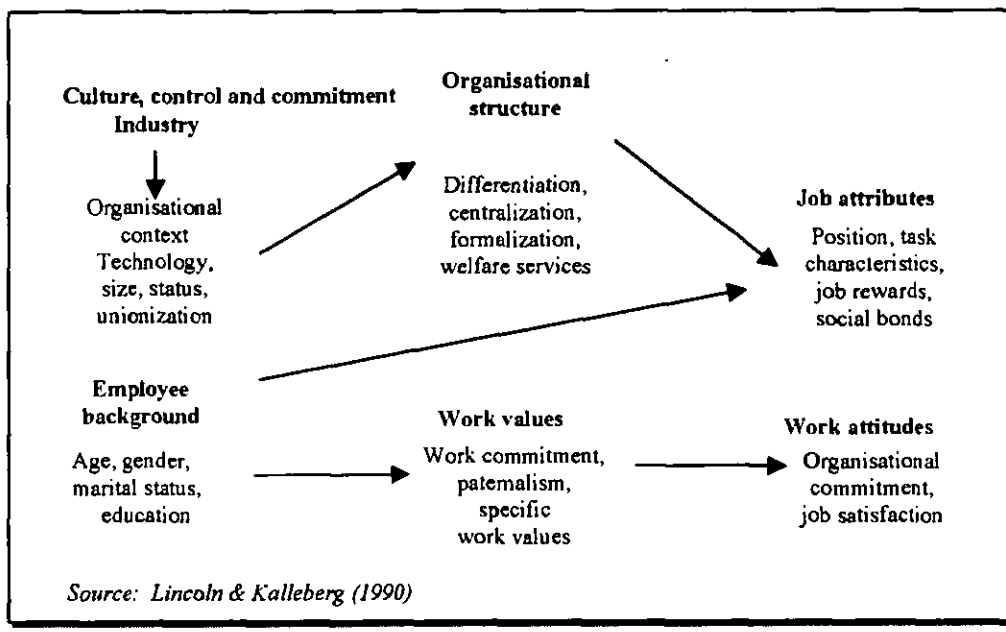


Figure 3.13 A Multi-level Model of Work Organisation and Work Attitudes

The models provided by Kopelman *et al* (1990) (Figure 3.3 in section 3.3) and Lincoln & Kalleberg (1990) are integrative as they describe the relational interaction between disciplines at the macro level.

As far back as 1954, Drucker has refocused on performance and the need for goals which stimulated many articulations. In the development of a productivity model, one group deals with the process of establishing goals and objectives (Locke & Latham, 1990) and have provided the high performance cycle which presents a comprehensive performance process, starting with goals, generating performance and resulting in rewards and satisfaction (Figure 3.14). In addition, Moderators which include such factors as goal commitment, feedback ability and situation constraints and Mediators which encompass

such items as effort and persistence, combined with demands, are acknowledged to impinge performance.

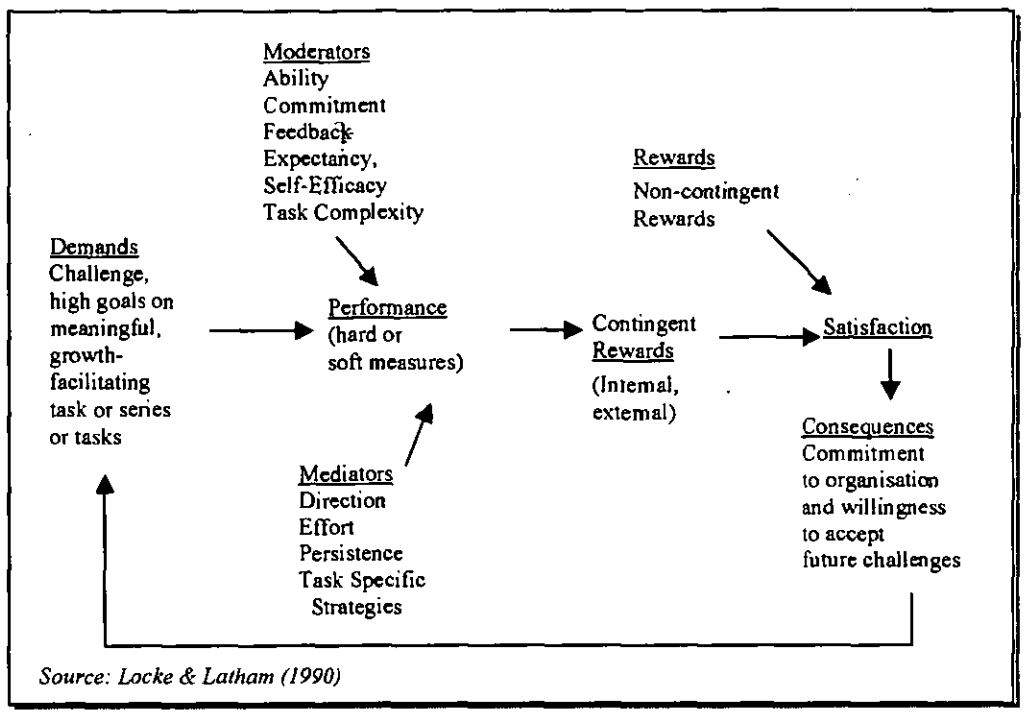


Figure 3.14 The High Performance Cycle

Kopelman's (1986) model of determinants of productivity in organisation is composed of four parts (Figure 3.15). Organisational and work characteristics are identified as affecting individuals' characteristics in the form of knowledge, skills, and abilities as well as motivation and attitude. These, in turn, affect the results in the areas of work behaviour, job performance and organisational effectiveness and productivity.

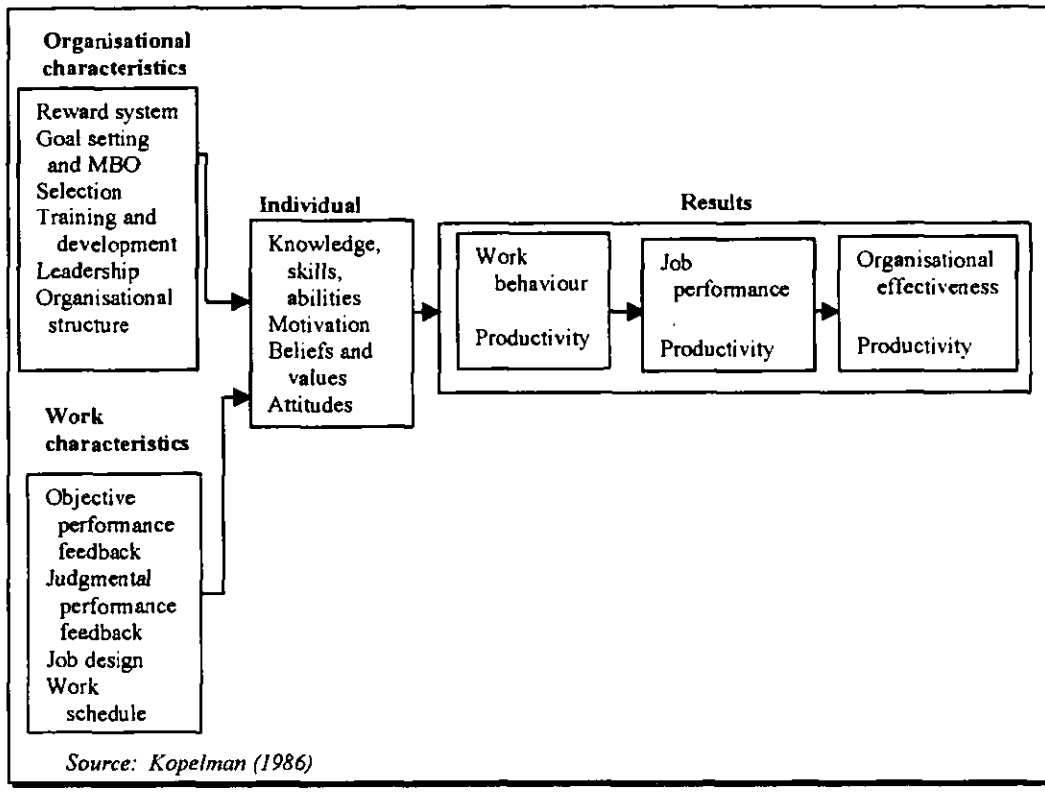


Figure 3.15 **Determinants of Productivity in Organisations**

Pritchard's (1990b) ProMES Approach (Figure 3.16) focuses on establishing the specificity of a measurement system. Organisational objectives are reduced to productivity measurement system, which through their use in the form of feedback, allow the organisation to monitor increases in productivity and the comparison to organisational objectives originally set. This model implicitly acknowledges goals, performance and feedback.

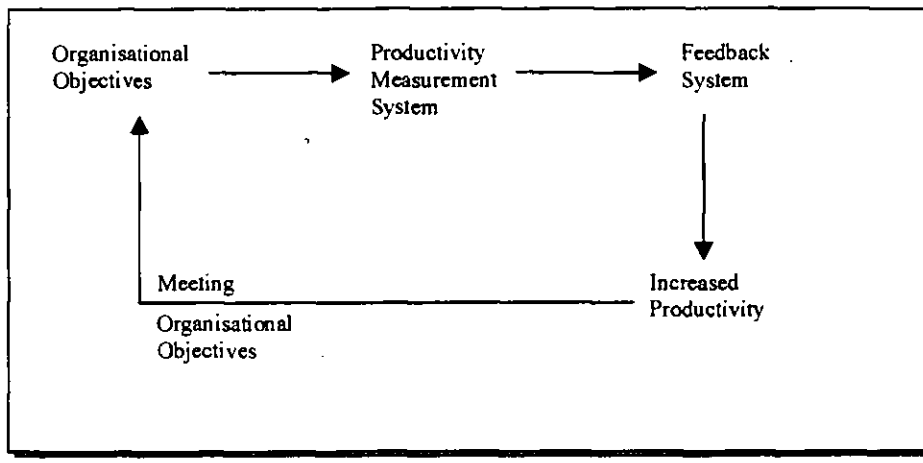


Figure 3.16 Basic ProMES Approach

In sections 3.2 through 3.5, it has been demonstrated, productivity is affected to a greater extent by personal, organisational, and environmental factors. The simplest motivational model, proposed by Davis (1989), emanates from the needs and drives of the individual and concludes with rewards (Figure 3.17).

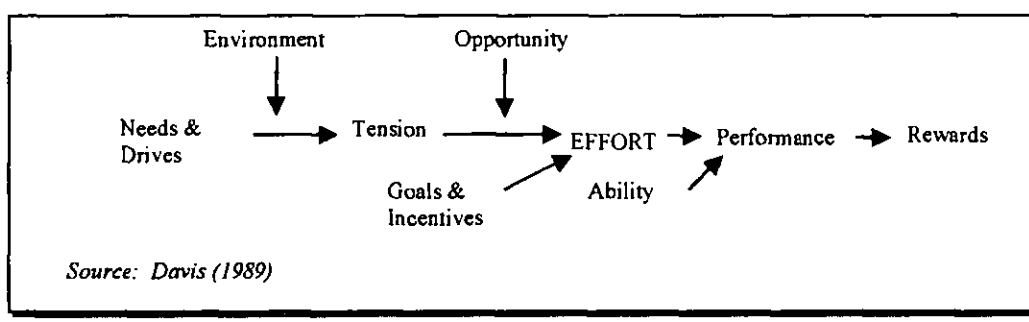


Figure 3.17 Model of Motivation

Suzaki (1993), using the classical definition of productivity being equal to the ratio of output to inputs, modifies the model (A) as the nature of the value created by the values invested into Model (B) and (C), to reflect the lean manufacturing and the total quality management philosophy (Figure 3.18). As can be seen, the denominator mirrors the same elements of organisational, work, and individual characteristics.

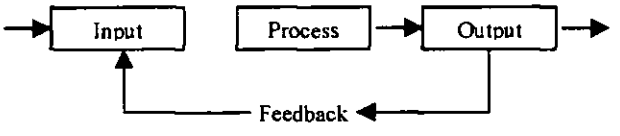
$$\text{Productivity} = \frac{\text{Output}}{\text{Input}} = \frac{\text{Output}}{\text{Minimum Input + Waste}} \quad \textbf{(A)}$$

or

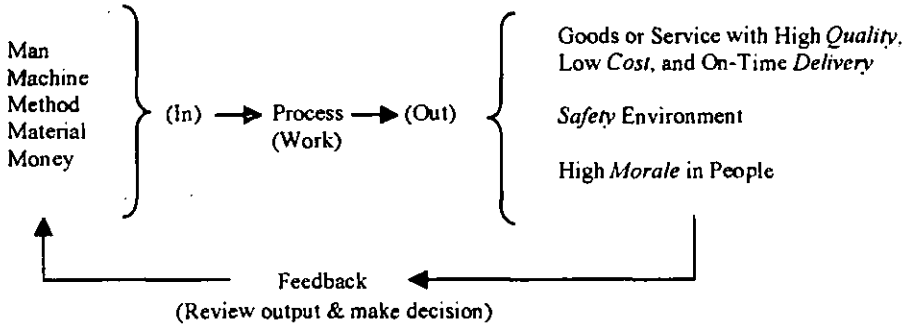
$$\text{Productivity} = \frac{\text{Value Created}}{\text{Values Invested}} = \frac{\text{Performance in QCDSM (Quality, Cost, Delivery Safety, Morale)}}{\text{Man + Machine + Material + Method + Measurement}} \quad \textbf{(B)}$$

In other words, we need to control these 5Ms to eliminate waste and provide high-quality products on time to our customers at low cost while providing a safe environment and high morale for people in the organization. An important question that we will address throughout this book, therefore, is how to provide adequate feedback and control the process more effectively and efficiently.

Exhibit 1.7. Feedback System to Control the Process **(C)**



or



Source: Suzaki (1993)

Figure 3.18 Performance [A Process]

In his model, Thierry (1996) attempts to provide a fuller description of the process which expands on the dynamics which are internal to the individual, reflecting the key decision points and criteria. It serves to illustrate the complexities and inter-relationships of the many variables involved (Figure 3.19). The interaction of such factors as culture,

workplace practices, motives, tensions and task strategy results in a variety of outcomes, including productivity.

As was the situation with the economic and culture models, the lines of demarcation are difficult to draw in relation to which variables are pertinent and the nature of their interaction to explain the phenomenon of productivity. The reality is that organisation behaviour/organisational development principles are applied in a context. Pfeffer (1998) states that "success frequently entails implementation rather than coming up with ideas, simply because in the current world, implementation is much more difficult. Dealing with the day-to-day details of operations and implementation are less glamorous, less interesting, but most importantly much harder to solve. Organisations - people, culture, capability, are important sources of competitive advantage. People are *the strategy*. This implementation capability derives, in large measure, from the organisation's people, how they are treated, their skills and competencies, and their efforts on behalf of the organisation". The six models reviewed in this section are, for the most part, theoretical. They provide conceptual blueprints which are identifying key factors to be considered, as well as the likely nature of their interaction. While each model is different, a commonality of ideas is found around goals, individual and workplace characteristics, performance, rewards and recognition and, in most cases, a feedback loop.

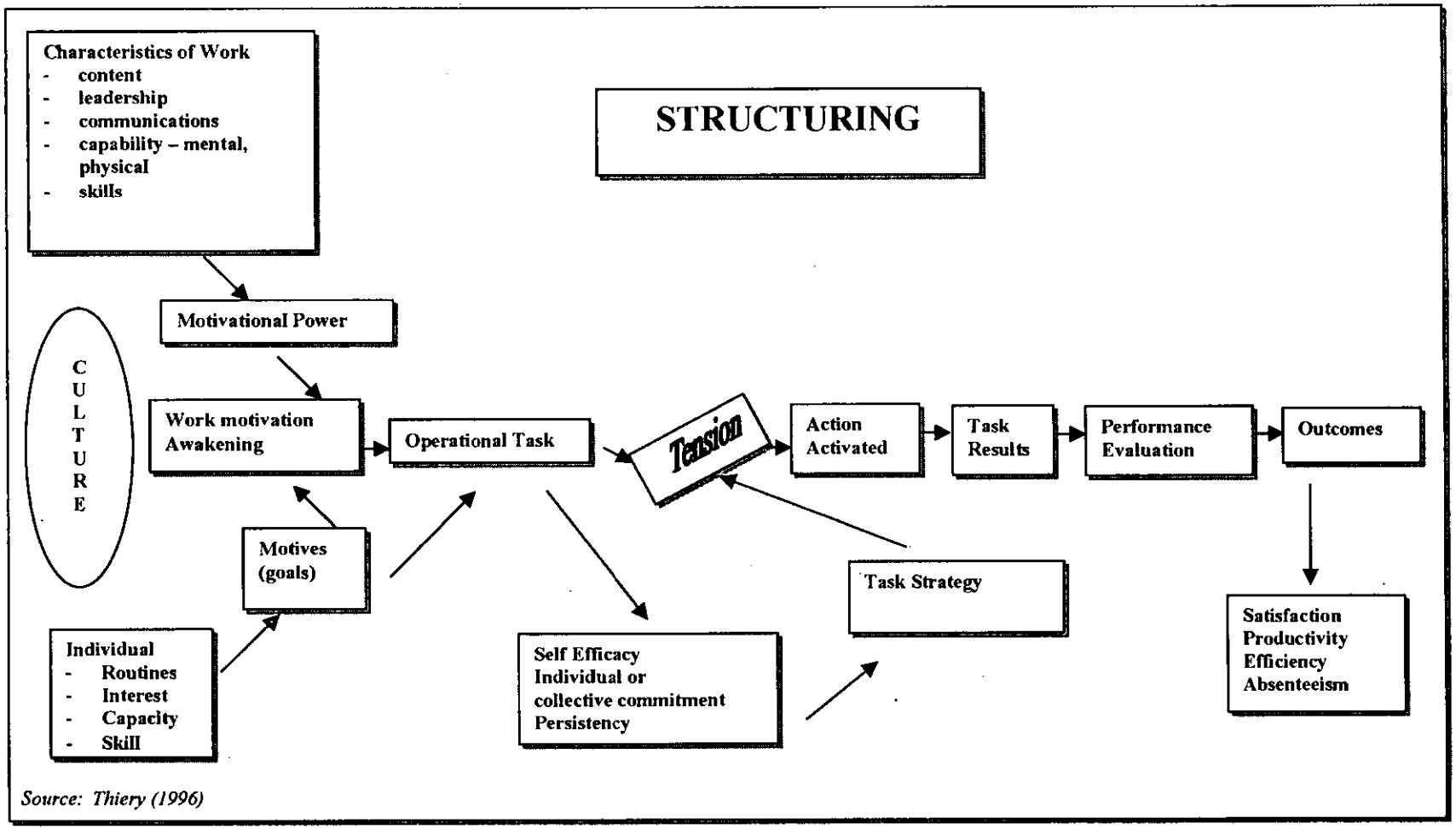


Figure 3.19 Factors Affecting Productivity - Personal Decision Process

3.6.2 Symbiotic Models

Productivity can also be represented as a symbiotic interaction between factors (Sumanth, 1996), where psychology, sociology, industrial engineering and management science interact, their overlap being TPmgt Thinking. Table 3.4 displays each discipline in relation to topics and factors. This model replaces the discipline oriented models proposed by the organisational disciplines.

Discipline		Topics		Factors
Psychology	-	Organisational Behaviour – Organisational Development	-	Motivational Factors
Sociology	-	Culture	-	Group Dynamics
Industrial Engineering	-	Techniques	-	Management Process, - Process Design
Management Science	-	Optimisation	-	Decision Criteria

Table 3.4 TPMgt Thinking Model

Each discipline approaches the issue of performance from its own perspective and puts forward a set of factors which takes prominence but needs to come together to understand the productivity process (Figure 3.20). The end result depicts the very same set of factors being identified in the economic, cultural, organisational behaviour as well as the evolutionary models; these do not claim to pertain to only one discipline but are truly eclectic.

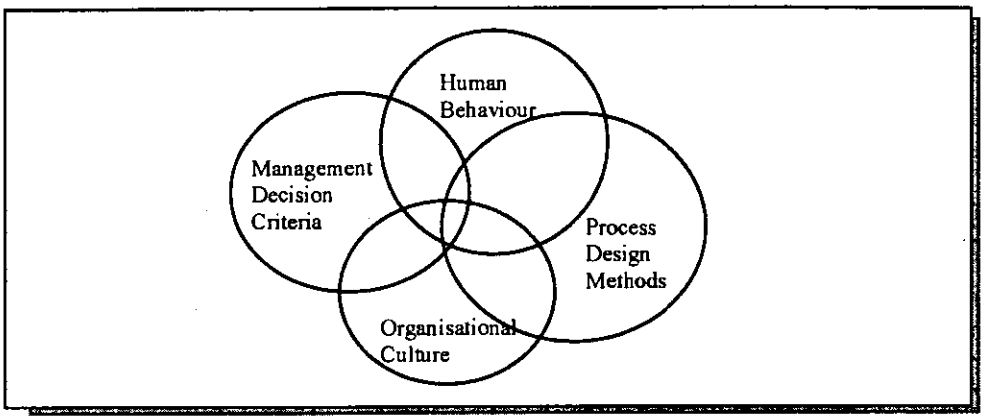


Figure 3.20 Symbiotic Interaction of Factors

In the same vein, Champagne & McAfee (1989) propose strategies for performance and productivity by putting forward specific topics from various disciplines shown as part of a wheel, all impinging on employee productivity (Figure 3.21). It is not so much the elements exhibited that are important, but rather the interaction between them which is of relevance.

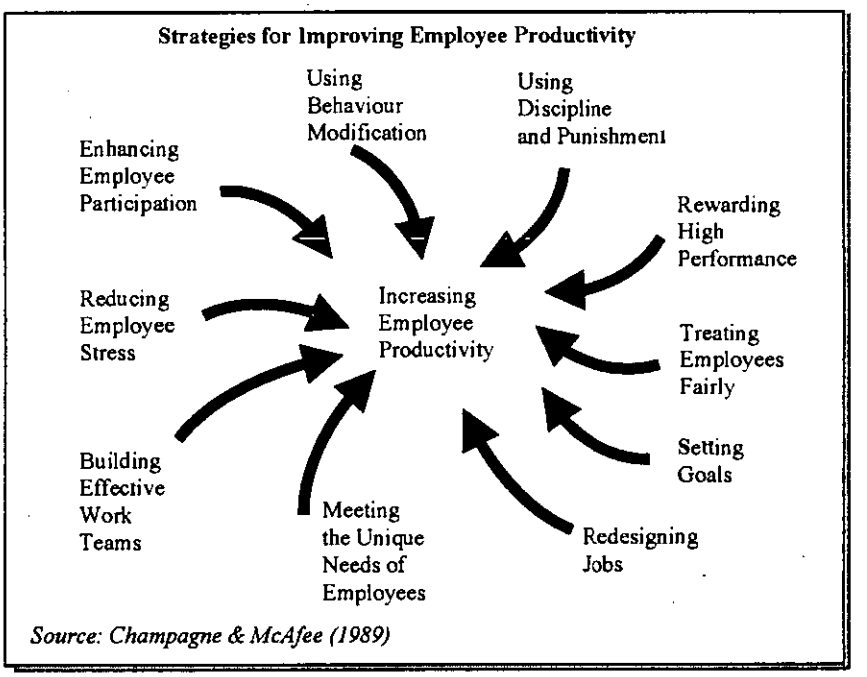


Figure 3.21 Strategies for Performance and Productivity

Other authors (Heisler *et al*, 1988; Rheem, 1995; Spangenberg & Theron, 2001) sometimes avoid the conceptual limitations of the models, and instead, use a descriptive definition of the term 'performance management'; this relates to the process of goal setting, managerial processes employed in transacting activities, as well as performance reviews and recognition. Occasionally, instead of using a linear model to describe their productivity paradigms, both Sumanth (1996) and Champagne & McAfee (1989) use non-linear models to illustrate the interactive nature of the variables involved, one of which is goals. This allows for the confounding effect of the variable which may be difficult to measure.

While change is an evolving continual process whether shown in a linear fashion, as a circular process, or in a symbiotic form, the same general components of expectations, human behaviour and feedback are present. The advantage of the symbiotic model is that it avoids the questions of which variable takes precedence while acknowledging the interaction which takes place between them. Such a view probably relates more to a real life scenario.

3.7 THE GENERIC PERFORMANCE MODEL

Even though authors vary in their emphasis and in their terminology, common elements emerge from the various productivity/performance models. Three basic components formulate the foundations of the process: the work environment characteristics in which individuals perform, the attributes of individuals in the workplace and the performance management process characteristics (Figure 3.22). Each element is reviewed. This section identifies the areas of consensus culminating into a proposed Generic Performance Model used in the development of the survey instrument for this research.

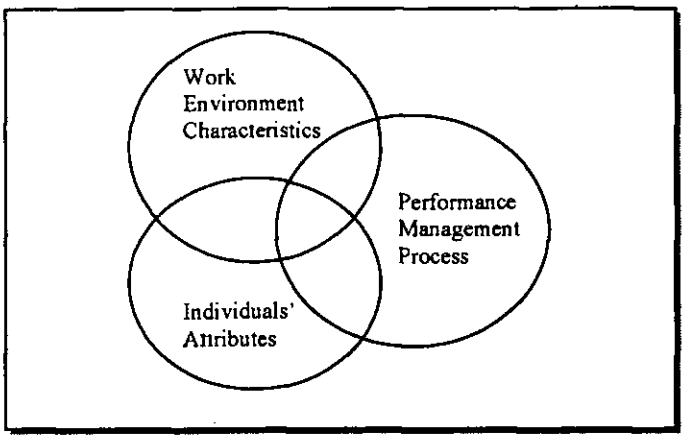


Figure 3.22 Components of the Process

3.7.1 Work Environment Characteristics

Work environment characteristics range from broad definitions, such as human resource practices (Kopelman *et al*, 1990) to specifics, such as job attributes (Lincoln & Kalleberg, 1990). Factors such as national and corporate cultures (Kopelman, 1986) are also reflected. Self-efficacy research considers work environment characteristics to the extent that they influence individuals' self-efficacy and performance. Examples include such factors as locus of control (Phillips & Gully, 1997), task demands (Steele-Johnson, 2000), social influences (Schunk, 1999) and organisational antecedents (Shea & Howell, 1998). For the purpose of this research, the work environment characteristics include those elements that are perceived by first-line managers as affecting their own performance and/or that of their department.

3.7.2 Attributes of Individuals

Individual characteristics also encompass a plethora of potential features. When the different models are compared, there is a significant level of consensus. One key factor seems to be the sense of ability/self-efficacy (Table 3.5).

Model	Feature
Kopelman *et al* (1990)	Cognitive and Affective States
Davis (1989)	Ability, Motivation
Lincoln & Kalleberg (1990)	Work attitudes, Employee Background
Locke & Latham (1990)	Ability, Self-efficacy
Kopelman (1986)	Knowledge, skills, abilities
Davis (1989)	Ability
VandeWalle (2001)	Self-efficacy

Table 3.5 Key Individual Attributes

3.7.3 Performance Management Process Characteristics

A number of elements relate to the sequential steps involved in achieving end results. Table 3.6 illustrates and compares the common features found amongst the various performance models. These relate to (1) Expectations, such as demands and goals, (2) Execution, such as performance and means and (3) Recognition such as rewards, feedback and satisfaction. The monitoring of, and accountability for results are very much part of the process.

Model	Expectations	Execution	Recognition
Locke & Latham (1990)	Demands	Performance	Rewards, Satisfaction
Pritchard (1990)	Products	Indicators Contingencies	Feedback Reward Orientation
Kopelman (1986)	Goal Setting	Means Emphasis	Rewards
Davis (1989)	Needs Drives & Goals	Performance	Rewards
Cox *et al* (1997)	Targets	Performance	Feedback Accomplishments
Renn & Fedor (2001)	Feedback – Based Goals	Work Quantity	Feedback
VandeWalle (2001)	Goals	Performance	Feedback

Table 3.6 Comparison of Performance Models

These models, in varying degrees, stress the same key elements of the performance management process, from expectations resulting with performance and leading to recognition/feedback (Figure 3.23). Expectations and performance are contiguous (Moores, 1994; Nealy 1998; Williams, 1998; McShane, 1998) where performance is defined as goal-oriented activities. Similarly, feedback is provided in the light of goals/expectations (Pritchard, 1990a). Thus the three do represent the components of the performance management process.

Figure 3.23 Performance Management Process

3.7.4 Recognition and Feedback

Recognition and feedback are an integral part of various performance models (Locke & Latham, 1990; VandeWalle & Cummings, 1997; Renn & Fedor, 2001), and hence are key elements of performance management. According to Ashford & Cummings (1983), feedback, the active monitoring and inquiry of information concerning job performance, facilitates achievement of goals in discerning priorities and the evaluation of employees' own competence. "1500 employees were surveyed in a variety of work settings to identify what they considered the most workplace motivators. Their response? Recognition, recognition, and more recognition" (Robbins & Langton, 1999). Moreover, Locke & Latham (1990) affirm that the combination of feedback and goals outperform the single use of goals, whilst Schunk (1999) demonstrates that feedback and goals combined outperform on self-efficacy as well as actual output. The systematic sharing of operating data with the workforce is acknowledged by 87% of managers surveyed as the primary gateway to workforce productivity (Longenecker *et al*, 1998).

The human dynamics associated with recognition/feedback are multi-faceted, one being the process of self-assessment. People seek self-satisfaction from fulfilling valued goals. It is recognised that goals motivate by enlisting self-evaluative involvement (Bandura, 1989). For individuals, to base their actions on rational calculations applied to feedback, the information itself must be first accepted (Korsgarrd *et al*, 1997). Cervone *et al* (1991) state that working toward well-defined goals, people react evaluatively to their attainments and use task feedback to assess their capabilities for future performance. However, Bartol *et al* (2001) find that individuals may not actually be motivated to set improvement goals and expend effort unless they perceive some reasonable prospect of success. Each of these findings underscores the implicit self-assessment process.

Moreover, feedback is related to the availability and form of information. Forza & Salvador (2000) denote the need for timeliness and relevance of shop-floor performance feedback. Kaplan & Norton (1992) illustrate the importance of daily information; converted into daily financial report, it gives the operators the powerful feedback and motivation to guide their quality and productivity efforts. Similarly, Kerrin (1998), in his discussion about dependency relationship, mentions the use of visual display as a means for information dissemination with the effect of peer pressure and accountability. Luthans & Stajkovic (1999) make the distinction between reward and a reinforcer; the former is perceived as valuable by the reward giver and the latter increases the strength and frequency of the desired functional, performance-related behaviours. The feedback and social reinforcers may have as strong an impact on performance as pay; this is because reinforcing for performance will always improve performance. Renn & Fedor (2001) also believe that there is a strong correlation between feedback and goals. In turn,

work quantity is affected through the goals employees established from available performance reports and from performance feedback provided by manager, co-workers, and customers. Thus, the information conveyed, through a number of sources, affects both goals and performance.

Feedback/recognition, though they cannot change the past, do greatly influence future decisions. Among other factors, Bandura & Jouden (1991) find that self-satisfaction, as well as past performance, have a positive impact on performance attainments. As Nease *et al* (1999) point out, "individuals generally respond to negative feedback by increasing the effort, decreasing their goals, or rejecting the feedback, whereas those faced with positive feedback may decrease their effort or increase their goals". VandeWalle *et al* (2001) observe that performance feedback has a strong correlation with goal level set for the following period; similarly, Vancouver (1997) states that reported goal levels may be more a function of past levels achieved than a representation of a desired state towards which individuals strive. These two notions could be construed as risk avoidance. In addition, when individuals' perspectives are taken into consideration, they would also contain an element of self-protection when goals are being set (Larrick, 1993), and would affect personal satisfaction (Atkinson, 1983). Shea & Howell (1998) indicate that belief in one's abilities can accrue from verbal persuasion, one's own past performance and through observing the outcomes of behaviours modelled by others; in other words, if it has been done before, it can be done again.

Management is a set of human interactions, not a series of mechanical tasks (Teal, 1996). As such, feedback/recognition should not to be construed as a procedural process but as dynamic exchanges of information which are interpreted and acted upon by the

individual. According to self-efficacy models (Early & Lituchy, 1991; Brett & VandeWalle, 1999), such a step very much impacts the choice of future goals and performance. In relation to supervisors, Fedor *et al* (2001) conclude that those with high perceived expertise or referent power will tend to motivate performance improvement following negative feedback – this might be normally rejected or ignored under other conditions. Hence, path-goal theory of leadership, which is concerned with relationships between formally appointed superiors and subordinates in their day-to-day functioning, is primarily a theory of task and person oriented supervisory behaviour (House, 1996). Here, the function of a leader refers to assisting subordinates through paths which ultimately lead to organisationally-desired and individually-valued outcomes (Schriesheim & Neider, 1996). Furthermore, perceived consideration appears to be strongly related to employee satisfaction levels regardless of situational characteristics (Schriesheim & Neider, 1996). In describing characteristics of high performance work organisations, Ashton & Sung (2002) state that training and feedback on performance need to be improved throughout the process of coaching and team development. The manager's role is to support work groups in their activities and, thus, the importance of first-line managers is further underscored as they are the primary interface with employees.

The distinction is made by VandeWalle (2001b) between goal-orientation and learning goal orientation. He states that employees with a strong performance goal orientation tend to perceive feedback as a judgment about their worth, while individuals with a strong learning goal orientation perceive feedback as diagnostic information that can be used to improve their performance. He concludes that "an *excessive* focus on performance can short-circuit the use of the very self-management and development

activities needed for high-level performance. In contrast, a strong learning goal orientation enhances performance because it promotes the use of self-regulation activities to achieve mastery for a current task endeavour and also fosters development of valuable skills for future challenging tasks". These findings further reinforce the need to focus on the means, while keeping in sight the ends to be achieved.

The process of recognition/feedback is not just uni-directional nor top-down. As pointed out by House (1996), achievement-motivated individuals do not receive satisfaction for achievement unless they are personally involved in the achievement and can attribute the achievement to themselves rather than others. Schmidt & Kleinbeck (1990) believe that goal setting and feedback are not just a means to determine performance but they also challenge workers to assess the manner in which they spend their time. This is best illustrated by a practice observed by the researcher at Toyota plants. Each week and each month, workers present to their colleagues the improvements which have been implemented, substantiated by pictures and graphs of the before and after. From such presentations, the best is selected and then introduced by the individual concerned to other plants in North-America and then in Japan for a world-wide competition. "You get what you reinforce" (Luthans & Stajkovic, 1999). From this example, it can be seen that feedback is also very much in the hands of the workers themselves. As purported by Sullivan (1999), information, a message content that reduces uncertainty, is believed to be crucial in the motivation process. As such Latham & Locke (1991) stress that "goal feedback and record-keeping provide the worker with a sense of achievement, recognition and accomplishment" and, as far as Pritchard (1990a) is concerned, "What you measure is what you get. If this data is formally fed back in addition to being measured, the effect is ever stronger". The combination of the workers' involvement by

tracking their own department's performance (Greif, 1991), through the use of key performance indicators relevant to their respective areas, as well as the public setting of goals and ensuing recognition by the organisation, are demonstrations of the application of the principles related to this component of the Generic Performance Model.

It seems that the recognition/feedback process provides the impetus for future activities. Lindsey *et al* (1995) report that the efficacy-performance relationship is cyclical whereby "performance affects self-efficacy, which in turn affects performance, and so on". Their results are also confirmed by Shea & Howell (2000) who also find that "high-quality performance feedback and related experience were significantly related to occurrence of self-corrections in the efficacy-performance relationship". Being interactive, it involves both managers and workers. The sense of risk, challenge and encouragement allows every individual to 'read' the situation and act accordingly. This is why it is a vital component of the Generic Performance Model.

3.7.5 The Generic Performance Model

For ease of visual depiction, a linear model, using two-way interaction between the elements, is proposed in the form of the Generic Performance Model (Figure 3.24).

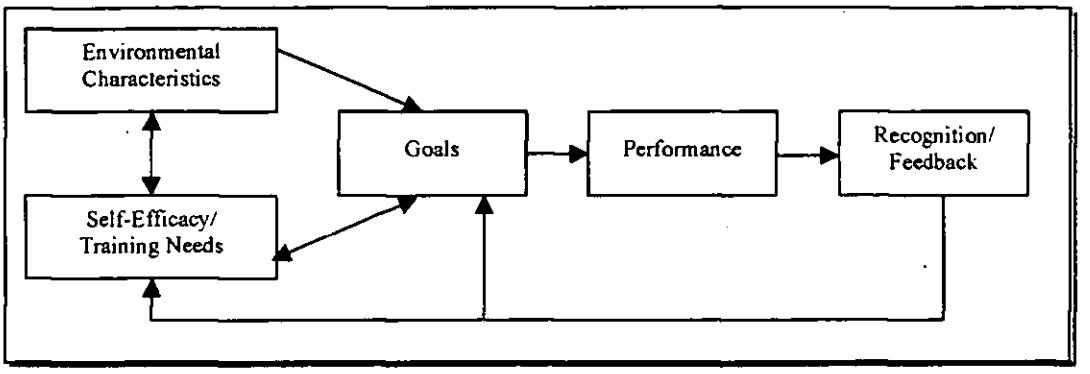


Figure 3.24 The Generic Performance Model

Environmental characteristics are inclusive of all factors external to the individual such as national, corporate and plant cultures. Given the importance of the combination of ability, motivation, work attitudes and personal background, self-efficacy is used to ascertain the personal judgement and belief of individuals possessing the skills and capabilities required. Goals are used contiguously with performance thus avoiding speculation on the actual focus at the first-line management level i.e. the end or the means. The category Recognition/Feedback represents the evaluation process taking place, either by the organisation with some form of communication or by the individual's own assessment.

From the review of the various models, and the consensus which exists as to what constitutes the fundamental building blocks, what remains to be determined is how each of these components is perceived at the first-line management level. The answers to the many questions will corroborate the nature of goals, the sense of self-efficacy, the environmental factors affecting the individual's performance and that of their dependents as well as the nature of recognition anticipated.

CHAPTER 4

GOALS, THE STARTING POINT

Tell me on what you spend your 'time' and I will tell you where your heart is!
For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also
Matthew 6:21

If your motivation and methods are virtuous,
you need not worry much about the results.
Kazuo Inamori, Founder of Kyocera Corporation, 1995

4.0 PREAMBLE

Different disciplines and models of productivity have, within their paradigms, the goal element. As pointed out by Stainer (1997), goals are an integral part of productivity management. "A goal-focused system is the best vehicle for institutionalising targeted changes in the management process and galvanising management action" (Stainer & Stainer, 1997). Regarding results-oriented management in government, Aristigueta *et al* (2001) explains that the "theory underlying managing for results is that the effectiveness, efficiency and accountability of government will improve when agencies focus their management practices on the results that programs are intended to achieve". Techniques, such as MBOs, benchmarking (American Productivity and Quality Centre, 1999), best practice (Jarrar & Zairi, 2000), organisational learning (Mohanty, 1998; Williams, 2001), while different in their approaches, share the common objective of goal setting.

Definitions, characteristics and implications of goals, that are particularly pertinent to first-line management, are reviewed. The key findings are that goals are multi-dimensional. The importance of goals is on the outcomes and responses they are meant to foster, not so much in the way in which they are measured. In this context,

environmental factors, as well as procedural approaches, have been found to affect the end results.

4.1 DEFINITON OF GOAL

At the risk of being embroiled in semantics, a safe starting point is a dictionary definition of 'goal': "the object of one's effort, target" (Oxford University Press, 1989). Of particular significance is that the definition contains two components: the object or target, and one's effort. The first aspect deals with the end point to be reached, whilst the second looks at the means to get there. Goal literature reflects two other perspectives: the nature or what constitutes a goal, with its typical characteristics, and the environment which surrounds the setting of goals. The former deals with measurable, quantifiable outcomes/outputs and is agreed upon (Latham & Locke, 1975; Buller & Bell, 1986, 1988; Locke & Latham, 1990a; O'Leary-Kelly *et al*, 1994; Cooper & Robertson, 1994; Winters & Latham, 1996; Mann, 1998). The latter considers a whole set of variables which not only affects goals but also the elements or factors which impinge on the outcome (Moussa, 1996; Knight *et al*, 2001).

4.2 THE MULTI-DIMENSIONAL NATURE OF GOALS

Goals can be studied from a number of directions through: the analysis of specific factors which impact on the output, the environment in which goals are explored, the process by which they are established, and the methods by which they are implemented. Examples include:

- Personal striving based upon personality traits (Carver & Scheier, 1981; Markus & Wurf, 1987; Emmons, 1989).

- Task goals (Locke & Latham, 1990b; Erez *et al*, 1990) and in terms of goal difficulty feedback, participation (Matsui *et al*, 1981; Campbell, 1982; Early *et al*, 1989).
- Goal determinants (Erez *et al*, 1990; Moussa, 2000; Isaac *et al*, 2001).
- Goal setting processes (Hollenbeck & Klein, 1987; Locke *et al*, 1988a; Moussa, 1996; Lee *et al*, 1997; Aristiqueta *et al*, 2001).
- Nature of goals: ends-or-means (Dweck, 1986; Carson & Carson, 1993; Winters & Latham, 1996; Brett & VandeWalle, 1999; Nicholas, 2000).
- Hierarchy in goals (Brett & VandeWalle, 1999; White, 2000).
- Enterprise goals and process goals (Kueng, 2000).
- The additive nature of factors (Applebaun & Bratt, 1994; Pfeffer, 1994; Becker & Gerhart, 1996).

As a result of the diverse perspectives, the analogy can be made with the rubic cube (Figure 4.1). The combination of the three axes and the colours of each of the faces make the puzzle difficult to unravel. The same seems true for goals, given the multi-dimensional nature and features which surround their meaning.

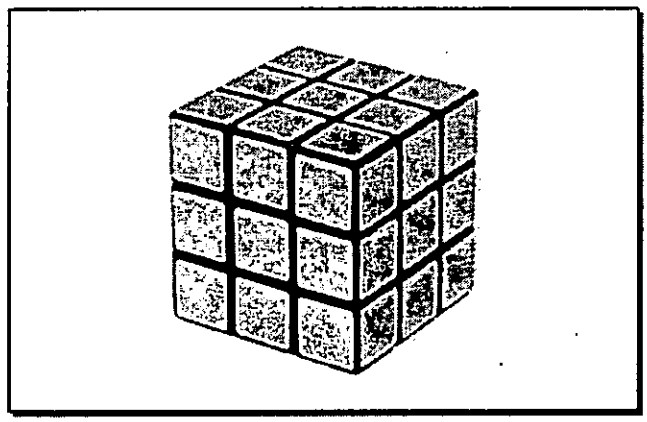


Figure 4.1 Multi-Dimensional Nature of Goals

In the managerial context, numerous types of goals are possible and indeed used, with the intricacies best illustrated by the following:

- "Goals are usually tied to processes, operated by people. A process can be characterised as a set of interrelated resources and activities which transform inputs into outputs" (ISO, 1994).

- "A process can be seen as a system or a subsystem consisting of interrelated components that have a common purpose and share a set of goals. In practice, process teams usually consist of a process manager and his/her subordinates, but other coordination mechanisms may be appropriate as well" (Kueng, 2000).

- "The distinctions we have suggested between inputs, process, outputs and outcomes are especially important given the highly complex and interdependent tasks people are facing today" (Shalley, 1991).

As can be seen, these statements include elements of organisational structure, management practices and operations, as well as different concepts of goals. However, the list of dimensions associated with goals expands with the authors' perspectives and related disciplines. For instance, Knight *et al* (2001) view their study as exploring relationships between variables taken from disparate theoretical domains. Although their main focus is goal theory, they argue that goals tie in varying ways to social-cognitive theory, prospect theory, agency theory, strategic management and incentive theory. They further state that it is important to study how different theoretical management principles operate in concert, because in the real world such principles rarely, if ever, operate in isolation. There are also various theories and principles to consider, each having its own set of variables which may influence the respective model. The goal's degree of difficulty, feedback, support and/or presence of supervisor, quality of relationship between worker and supervisor, are only some examples of the complex networks which can affect performance. All 'discovered' under the rubric of goals.

The number of qualifiers expands as greater insights are gained on the factors which affect results. According to Mitchell & Wood (1994), goals can be used by managers at more mundane, but still important levels; they may be used by managers in planning

processes (a) to focus attention and to stimulate the analyses that identify what needs to be done by a group, department, or organisation, and (b) to provide a specific task orientation to staff. Management outputs are frequently the result of complex causal paths. Many elements impinge upon outcomes as well as moderate, enhance, diminish or otherwise influence the impact that goals have upon behaviour (Mitchell, 1982; Wood & Bailey, 1985). In short, goals can reflect a number of purposes or represent subsets of super-ordinate goals.

In a managerial context, given the need for goals, the question then becomes as to what characteristics, or under what circumstances, should they be set? The focus must be on the accomplishment of a specific outcome which can become the yardstick for success. The inference is that goals act as operants on people, resulting in improved performance. There is a definite link between goals and results as clearly established by Locke & Latham (1990b). Though goals are a foundational component of performance and productivity, several factors come to the fore which are closely tied to the issue of goals:

1. The organisational dimensions.
2. The element measured – the end or the means.
3. The human dimensions.
4. The organisational values.
5. The interrelationship with first-line management.

Each of these has a body of research which purports to that specific area of interest. All are explored individually.

4.2.1 The Organisational Dimensions

As part of the management process, goals cross each and all levels of the organisation, from the corporate entity down to the individual employee. An organisation is imbued by its presence. If a company truly cares about an issue, it will incorporate relevant indicators to be used to evaluate employees. For managers, these may well represent the 'culture' of an organisation. The transmission of organisational values to lower levels is reflected in goal indicators (Mitchell & Wood, 1994). Using MBOs, the goals of the organisation are conveyed to the different entities which, in turn, set their own goals which will support the overall objectives (Hellriegel *et al*, 1998; Schermerhorn *et al*, 2000). The same concept is applied by Suzaki (1993) but he uses a different terminology. In his view, the control item (goal) at one level of management is broken down into check items (action items) which in turn become the control items (goals) for the underlings, that is the control items reflect the cause-and-effect relationships (Figure 4.2).

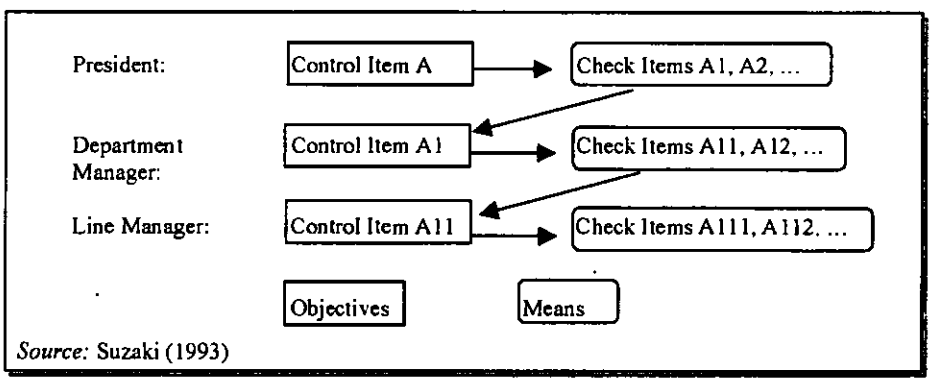


Figure 4.2 Control Items Reflect Cause-and-Effect Relationships

Thus, it becomes clear that, as the process is repeated at each subsequent level of management, the goals are more unit specific. Whilst this system functions at every level of management, it may ensue a risk of discontinuity if it is not applied consistently

throughout the organisational structure as well as between functions. When discussing corporate culture, a lack of alignment can hinder learning within an organisation, and, as Schein (1996) points out, the three communities of executives, engineers and operators do not really understand each other well. Using several examples, in diverse industries, he proceeds by stating that "these cultures cut across organisations and are based on what have been described as 'occupational communities'".

The theories share an underlying assumption that goals or identities are hierarchically organised and that higher-order goals drive a certain level of consistency through to middle-level and lower-level action goals (Brett & VandeWalle, 1999). Mitchell & Wood (1994) acknowledge the wide variety of goals for a wide variety of purposes and organisational levels. It is evident that goals can vary due to a discipline, functional perspective or level of management (Daniels & Burns, 1997), and/or the scope at the individual level.

4.2.2 The Element Measured – the Ends or the Means

As already mentioned, two dimensions of a goal are the object and one's effort. There has been an acknowledgement of the distinction between these two aspects (Earley *et al.* 1987; Wood & Locke, 1990; Pearlstein, 1991; Nicholas, 2000). For instance, the contrast is made between process goals and outcome goals where the focus shift is towards the task process in terms of strategy development and away from task outcome (Pearlstein, 1991). Goals cue the individual to direct attention to the formulation and use of strategies to perform the task (Dweck, 1986). The distinction is important as the starting premise triggers or requires differing behaviour patterns on the part of first-line managers. In general, few acknowledge the distinction. Nicholas (2000) states that

managers make the mistake of mixing up the expectation for improvement with the planning for improvement. It seems that one cannot be ignored at the expense of the other. The focus is placed on 'what' must be accomplished, with the emphasis on quantifying specific targets expressed as 'outcome oriented goals' as well as on 'how' the goals are to be accomplished; the process of achieving them is expressed as 'means oriented goals'. However, the yardstick used in assessing 'performance' must be different.

Not only is there a choice between the end or the means in goal setting, but there is also the appropriateness of the measures which is in question when assessing the 'end' performance, as raised by Imai (1997). He quotes an observation by Professor Hitoshi Kume of Tokyo University: "I think that while quality control in the West aims at 'controlling' the quality and conformance to standards and specifications, the feature of the Japanese approach centres around improving (*kaizen*) quality". In other words, while the West is busy assessing statistics, the foreman in Japan would concentrate on the elements to deliver the product, through man, machine, materials and process. The distinction between the end and the means should not be readily dismissed as a cultural difference.

Straight (2000) stresses the fact that "many other authors have also noted that the selected measures influence the behaviour of the people being measured" (Eccles, 1991; Osborne & Gaebler, 1992; Kamensky, 1993; Behn, 1995). A potential pitfall may be in the selection of the metrics that do not match the goals. The choice of metrics is very much dependent on the nature of goals: the ends or the means, the process or outcome, the control or check items.

4.2.2.1 Outcome Oriented Goals

A basic assumption in goal theory is that goals are either outcome or output oriented (Buller & Bell, 1986; Latham & Locke, 1975; Latham *et al,* 1988; O'Leary-Kelly *et al,* 1994; Cooper & Robertson, 1994; Mann, 1998). Winters & Latham (1996) define goals as an outcome that is a specific quantity or quality of something to be achieved. Yet, it is not only quantity or quality, but also time to be taken into account. By using short-term outcomes, such as quantity of performance, Matthews & Mitchell (1994) conclude that it is essential to incorporate a longer time span in order to assure consistent performance.

In their review of the literature, when looking at work motivation as a high performance cycle, Locke & Latham (1990a) provide a comprehensive list of key factors which impact on the effectiveness when establishing goals:

Goal specificity

Goal difficulty

Sources of job demands

Time horizon

Feedback

Management involvement.

Significantly, specific studies have been made which could be considered as variances on these key dimensions, such as participation (Latham, 1975, 1978, 1986), prior existence of goals (Latham *et al,* 1988), feedback (Anthony, 1990), nature of measures (Bommer *et al,* 1995), goals' time horizon (Parkinson, 1957; Bryan & Locke, 1967). Each shows the breadth and scope of the variables which play an important role in goal-setting. For analysis a comprehensive data base may be required to track each of these variables

within different organizational contexts. The magnitude of such an endeavour can quickly become overwhelming.

4.2.2.2 Means Oriented Goals

The dominant perception in Japan is that the whole is more than the sum of the parts. According to Hayashi (1988b), "the essence of a thing is found not in the details but in the whole. . . Goals merge in long-term interest, a common destiny". In reviewing the concept of productivity, Stainer (1995) points out that the Japanese have a more holistic approach to taking into account quality, quantity, delivery and price, manpower, facilities and material; they concentrate on the indicators of the various elements. Japanese systems of employee evaluation and compensation, particularly the latter, reflect management emphasis on group performance rather than individual performance. Sai, (1995) suggests that, in addition, loyalty to one's organisation, good faith, effort, cooperativeness and willingness to take responsibilities for the sake of one's group are some of the key factors being assessed. Based upon the observation of over thirty Japanese plants, it is clear that the practice is to pre-eminently display goals throughout the work area.

As a result of many interviews at the corporate and departmental level within Japanese organisations, it was observed that an individual's role is not spelled out formally in a job description. Each worker is expected to learn from his/her *senpai* (person next in seniority) with specific jobs being assigned on a day-to-day basis. As purported by Sai (1995) and Hayashi (1988b), managers or supervisors often express things in general terms, leaving the interpretation to the judgment of individual subordinates. While Western research professes the virtues of goals as an end, the Japanese first-line

managers choose to emphasise the means. Since the quantified results are taken for granted as having to be met, motivating and training of the subordinates is key in managers' minds. The Founder of Kyocera Corporation believes that "If your motivation and methods are virtuous, you need not worry much about the results" (Inamori, 1995). Thus, should goals represent the end result in a quantified format or should they focus on the means? Posing the same questions to different groups of survey respondents can reveal interesting similarities as well as telling differences in perceptions (Berkowitz, 1996). The survey is to clearly demonstrate the differences in perception of the first-line manager.

4.2.3 The Human Dimensions

It is the operant nature of goals on individuals and the resultant impact on outcomes which makes goals such an important issue. "Goals determine the definition of success and failure and thereby affect the calibration of gain and loss" (Knight *et al*, 2001). They primarily enhance performance motivationally through their effect on individuals' intentions in relation to effort and persistence. They increase performance cognitively by directing attention, and then intention, to discover strategies that will lead to goal attainment (Earley *et al*, 1989; Latham *et al*, 1994). Goals can be influenced by a number of factors.

4.2.3.1 Characteristics of Individuals Involved

Personality, personal striving, ability and expectancies play a vital role in actual performance and response to goals. Some personality research has focused on the nature of goals or higher level personal strivings (Carver & Scheier, 1981; Markus & Wurf,

1987; Emmons, 1989). Goals can be conceptualised more as a mental framework for how individuals interpret and respond to achievement situations. Dweck (1986) and Dweck & Leggett (1988) identify two broad classes of underlying goals that individuals pursue in achievement settings:

(a) a learning goal orientation to develop competence by acquiring new skills and mastering new situations

(b) a performance goal orientation to demonstrate and validate the adequacy of one's competence by seeking favourable judgments and avoiding negative judgments about one's competence.

4.2.3.2 Adequate Preparation

Earley & Lituchy (1991) and Kanfer (1992) investigate the complex relationships among goals, expectancies, self-efficacy and performance. Such research has helped considerably in explaining why and how goal setting works. Individuals with a performance goal orientation tend to hold an entity theory about their ability which they view as a fixed, uncontrollable personal attribute. Those with a learning goal orientation tend to hold an incremental theory about their ability and perceive it as a malleable attribute to be developed through effort and experience (Brett & Vandewalle, 1999). The basic premise is that the sense of ability is as much one of personal adequacy, team adequacy, resources and perceived managerial support.

4.2.3.3 Skill Levels

One revealing statement by Suzaki (1993) indicates the close relationship between skills and goals. His view is that, as people's skills are upgraded, the goal-setting process will also be upgraded. When daily, weekly, monthly and yearly reviews "are well orchestrated and coordinated, they will compound the power of the people working

together as a well trained body functions". MacGyvers (1992) and Button *et al* (1996) have conceptualised goal orientation as a two-factor construct that is learning and performance. The items used to operationalise the performance factor have primarily focused on concerns with proving ability.

There could well be an interaction between the perception of the subordinates' skill level by the supervisor as well as the supervisor's own skill level. However, more important is the supervisor's perception of the skill level of subordinates. The choice of goal by the manager signals to the group that the goal is considered to be achievable (Locke & Latham, 1990a; Shapira, 1995; Bandura, 1997; Knight *et al*, 2001). The key to performance is to have all parties stretch beyond the comfort zone and, hence, target a higher set of goals.

4.2.3.4 Interpersonal Relationships

Interpersonal relationships are vital in goal setting and goal achievement. As Schrader (1997) explains, role relationships are a defining feature of influence for goals. This is especially significant between worker and direct supervisor (Herzberg, 1991). The individual's perception of self-efficacy is very much dependent upon such inter-relationships which, in turn, affect goals (Phillips & Gully, 1997; Renn & Fedor, 2001; VanderWalle *et al*, 2001).

4.2.3.5 Perceived Risk

Behind each of these human dimensions is the element of perceived risk. People are willing to accept higher levels of risk when they believe they have the necessary skills to

deal with them (Knight *et al*, 2001). The effect of goal difficulty on strategic risk is partly mediated by team efficacy, a finding consistent with social-cognitive theory (Bandura, 1997). The risk of failure by subordinates to meet a goal can be a deterrent to managers. The possibility of having to take drastic action or the potential for ridicule may encourage managers to set low standards (Schaffer, 1991; Lord & Brown, 2001). However, the boss's endorsement in the pursuit of a goal provides the necessary affirmation that such a pursuit is within reach (Latham *et al*, 1988; VandeWalle, 2001).

4.2.4 The Organisational Values

Pearlstein (1991) suggests that effective leadership development, linking process goals with outcome goals, includes elements which would entail mechanisms to institutionalise long-term leadership and organisational development goals and training, to address both skills and personal values. It seems, therefore, that goals are closely interrelated with values. All are concomitant in a process in which each plays a role.

The issue of values is probably best illustrated by the view presented by Deming (1986) who preaches to do away with goals. Carson & Carson (1993) ask a valid question about Deming's argument when the goal setting theory has been validated in over 500 different studies. The issue tackled by Deming is related to the context in which goals are used. When Deming's argument is analysed, the issue is more to do with the misuse of goals. An example is the inherent set of values incorporated within the *kaizen* philosophy which implies goal improvements to be monitored. Locke & Latham, (1990a) stress that feedback is a key ingredient in the effective implementation of goals. The issue is not so much the use of goals, or the tracking of results against the goals set, but the way in which information is used.

According to Dose (1997), organisational values are evaluative standards relating to work, or the work environment, by which individuals discern what is 'right' or assess the importance of preferences. The definition of a value, as suggested by Rokeach (1973), is "an enduring belief that a specific mode of conduct or end-state of existence is personally or socially preferable to an opposite or converse mode of control". Goals are a direct reflection of choices and thus of a value system (Judge & Cable, 1997). Windbush (1999) points out that an ethical climate, similar to any other organizational climate, is created and sustained based primarily upon supervisory initiatives. This is an all important issue, especially for first-line managers as messages conveyed will impute a sense of responsibility and commitment.

Many of the features, such as time horizon and the actual essence of goals, form a composite definition of goals. For example, Nash (1990) explains "Short-term performance goals are the predominant feature of most management incentive systems... when profit becomes the dominant purpose, it is not prioritised, it is exclusified. It leads to a restriction of a manager's definition of goals and to an indifference to the means by which these goals are pursued". These observations are crucial when the responses of first-line managers are analysed and interpreted; implied are the values of the organisation.

Both under the Japanese and Canadian management practices, goals are essentially 'ordained' throughout the organisation through the form of strategic plans, budgets and corporate objectives. The discretionary area for first-line managers, however, is often limited to 'how' such goals and objectives are to be accomplished. The priorities may be different because of values.

4.2.5 The Interrelationship with First-line Management

When reviewing the intensity of world-class competition, it appears that there is a close interaction between goals and the first-line managers. This is evidenced by Daniels & Burns (1997) who declare that "the shop floor and the production cell will have key roles to play in the development or survival of many Western Companies". It seems that the central role of supervisors/first-line managers is acknowledged universally from South Africa to Japan (Daniels & Burns, 1997; Imai, 1997) as well as in a number of industries (McKinsey, 1999b). The pivotal position of the cell leader or line manager in the implementation of novel strategies and tools has been recognized for some time (Daniels & Burns, 1997; Pfeffer & Sutton, 2000). In a variety of settings, such as project management (Zimmer & Yasin, 1998; Sattler & Neights, 1998) as well as in assembly work (Reiger, 1995), the first-line manager emerges as a key factor in the success or failure of the team. The importance of management at the grass-root level is not limited to production (McKinsey, 1999a), but is due to a number of factors, with supervision playing an important role:

- in conveying a sense of purpose (Strebel, 1996; Savolainen, 2000; Williams, 2001)
- in building the human potential of subordinates (Klein & House, 1995; Jung & Avolio, 1999)
- through personal credibility (Becker *et al*, 1996; Benkhoff, 1997)

These various research efforts establish the contribution to that level of management. Because of their importance, this issue will be further explored.

4.3 IN SUMMARY

In examining the different facets of goals, it has been shown that their character may vary depending on the individual's position in the organisational structure. The outlook

may focus on the ends or the means. The values of the organisation may have a direct impact on the choice of goals. In short, first-line managers have a key role to play in the process surrounding goals.

These factors illustrate the multi-dimensional nature of goals and the complexity of the topic. When these are amalgamated and measurements are identified to track their presence, analysis becomes very difficult. Thus, the eventual simplification of the situation by using techniques such as simulations or narrowing the research to few parameters would provide a more controllable environment, though findings might be considered less than representative. Through such a simplification process, much remains unexplored, including the actual perception of goals at the first-line management level.

CHAPTER 5

FIRST-LINE MANAGEMENT: THE KEY TO PRODUCTIVITY/PERFORMANCE DIMENSION

The person who knows 'how' will always have a job.
The person who knows 'why' will always be his boss.
Diane Ravitch

In times of crisis, nearly everything may depend on the regard and confidence placed in some man who possesses the experience and qualities of a leader.
Plutarch

5.0 PREAMBLE

In today's economy, because of the rapidity in which changes are introduced due to such things as acquisitions and reengineering, the workplace is in flux (Beer, 2001). Thus, the workforce needs to adapt quickly to each new expectation. As first-line managers control close to 90% of the human resources, their influence in adapting to present day demands is significant. They face unique challenges and have a key role to play to achieve performance improvements. Consequently, it is important to understand the different titles and various expectations placed on them in terms of responsibilities and roles. Surprisingly, however, little attention has been paid to supervisors and supervision, even though the role of first-line supervision is identified as fundamental to the success of modern organisations (Bissell & Beach, 1996). The issues related to different styles of management and their implied sets of values, that may be helpful in the interpretation of the results of this research, are also discussed.

5.1 WHAT CONSTITUTES FIRST-LINE MANAGEMENT?

According to Daft (1999), first-line managers are the first or second level of management and have such titles as supervisors, line managers, section chief, and office manager. They are responsible for groups of non-management employees. Their primary concern is the application of rules and procedures to achieve efficient production, provide technical assistance and motivate subordinates. The time horizon at this level is short, with emphasis on accomplishing day-to-day objectives. It is worth noting that his definition reflects only one strand of thought with regard to goals as short-term, day-to-day objectives which imply a task orientation. This definition highlights the fact that various titles and organisational needs can make the nature of the first-line manager position different from one setting to the next. Due to the complexity of the position, a large number of permutations in expectations are possible. Waldman & Yammarino (1991) state that managers with the same or similar job titles and descriptions may emphasise the importance of particular skills or tasks while others may underscore different areas.

It seems important to gather job analytic information to gain a fuller understanding of the job in question. For this purpose, first-line management is explored in terms of title and roles. Also, in order to have an accurate assessment of the position, the activities and time allocations may reflect the true nature of the position which is to achieve a set of tasks or goals. The term 'first-line management' in this research includes all personnel who directly supervise staff involved in an operating capacity. As Patten (1988) declares, such positions require managerial responsibilities which are supervisory, involving responsibility for line supervision and control or advisory, rendering advice or counsel in a staff capacity.

5.1.1 The Many Titles

Though the task of overseeing non-management employees may be well defined, titles abound which are used to identify incumbents in the position. As purported by Phillips (1985) such titles include lead hand, group leader, team leader, foreman, supervisor, assistant manager, or by Schermerhorn (2000) supervisor, department head and team leader; they are all common to first-line managers. Thus, the difficulty is the comparability. As an example, two individuals, a car service manager and a supermarket supervisor, may have the same title but their respective responsibilities may be completely different. One who supervises auto mechanics who works independently and whose pay is based upon standards and revenues generated, whilst the latter can be responsible for pricing, advertising and promotion, as well as have direct supervision of personnel. In some situations, individuals may be members of a 'union', while in certain others they may not and would be considered 'management'. The diversity of responsibility not only varies by industry but also within an industry. Different organisations will have different practices. Titles, roles, responsibilities and accountability will vary from situation to situation.

5.1.2 The Many Roles

Organisations are social arrangements for the controlled performance of collective goals. As such, it is necessary to concentrate on the part of the organisation that has the oversight of the preponderance of workers. Taylor (1967) proposes functional foremanship; the job of general foreman is to be divided between eight separate individuals, each overseeing a separate function of the work and who would also be called foreman. Buchanan (1985) lists these as (Figure 5.1):

1. Inspector
2. Order of work and route clerk
3. Time and cost clerk
4. Shop disciplinarian
5. Gang boss
6. Speed boss
7. Repair boss
8. Instruction card clerk

Source: Buchanan (1985)

Figure 5.1 Foreman's Roles

In contrast, Walker *et al* (1956) illustrate the concern for good supervision, whatever title used, and his viewpoint is as valid today as it ever was. They state:

> Good *foremen* should treat their subordinates as individuals on the job; establish a personal relationship apart from the job relationship; teach and promote their subordinates as far as possible; be a shock absorber; stand up for their subordinates; and consult and delegate responsibility to them.

They continue to explain the reality as perceived by foremen who feel that: "to get production by getting tough too often merely reinforced the disagreeable aspects of the job, and so lowered morale. It was generally considered an outmoded supervisory technique". Moreover, they analyse the time allocated to the key areas of a foreman's activities (Table 5.1). They also provide the areas of job content in the behavioural and humanistic terms by listing the key areas of the job: human relations, swift adjustment of the novice, mobile work environment, day-to-day personal problems, promotion and assessment.

	Time Allocation
Helping Operators	20%
Quality	18%
Personnel Administration	16%
Materials	14%
Equipment, Tools, etc.	10%
Work Progress	7%
Employee Job Performance	5%
Non Job Related	4%
Other	6%

Source: Walker et al (1956)

Table 5.1 Foreman's Activities

Similarly, Stewart (1991) stresses that a manager is someone who achieves results through other people, as distinct from those who achieve results through their own work. He sees 'managing' as to include instructing, controlling, influencing, guiding, persuading. In other words, day-to-day contact and interfacing with hourly workers or professionals are key.

More recently, Yukl (1994) also looks at activities or roles performed by leaders at any level. He groups them into five categories:

Planning, coordinating, and organising operations

Supervising subordinates (directing, instructing, monitoring performance)

Establishing and maintaining good relations with subordinates

Establishing and maintaining good relations with superiors, peers, and outsiders

Assuming responsibility for observing organisational policies, carrying out required duties, and making necessary decisions.

These categories are very similar to those proposed by Mintzberg (1973) and Daft (1999). The latter proposes a model which represents the relative time allocation for

functional activities by Western managers at three different levels of management (Figure 5.2). The importance of human interaction with subordinates in the form of 'leading' by first-line managers, in comparison to other levels of management, further illustrates their unique value added.

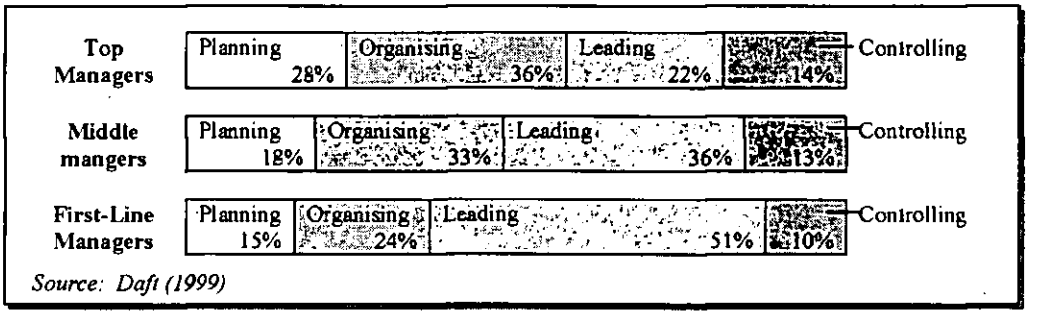


Figure 5.2 Percentage of Time Spent on Functional Activities by Organisational Level

He also shows the degree of technical skills expected from first-line managers reflecting the hands-on nature of the work (Figure 5.3), first proposed by Katz (1974). In short, they both view conceptual skills as increasing at each higher level of management, human skills' requirements remaining constant and technical skills' requirements decreasing with each higher level of management; actual 'hands-on' becomes less and less.

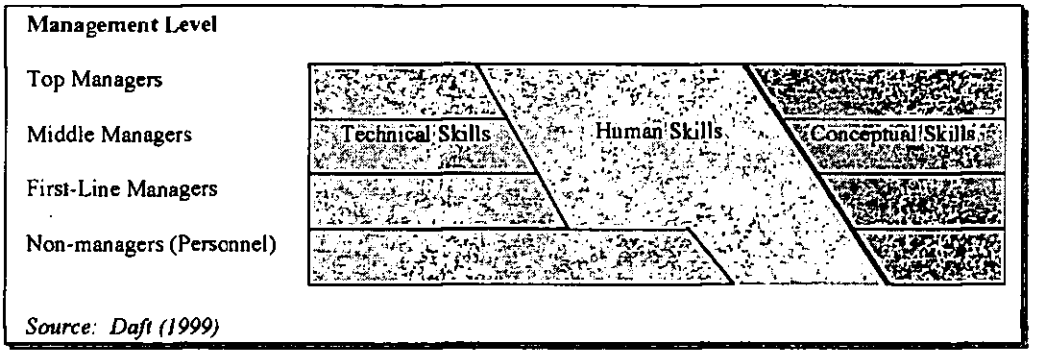


Figure 5.3 Relationship of Conceptual, Human and Technical Skills to Management Level

As can be seen from Figures 5.2 and 5.3, individuals at different management levels in an organisation perform similar activities and use similar types of skills, but the relative mix of time and proficiency is normally drastically different. Recognising the plethora of titles and permutation of roles in first-line management is crucial for the purpose of this study for two main reasons: firstly, the terminology used in the marketplace is diverse and, secondly, a wide range of goal perceptions are present depending on the industry, type of organisational structure and roles.

5.2 THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FIRST-LINE MANAGEMENT

Whatever the discipline, whether the behaviourists and economists, or whether performance is measured at the national economy level or at the level of the individual, the first-line manager is the point person (Phillipps, 1985). The challenge is to have committed supervisors who will motivate and equip subordinates; yet, it has been stated that only 51% of first-level supervisors are committed to their employers (Work Canada, 2000a).

Looking at high-performance manufacturing organisations, Longenecker *et al* (1998) identify barriers to high-performance, one of which is ineffective managerial support. According to Katzenback (1996), "the real change leaders who affect how the majority of people perform come from the ranks of middle and frontline managers. The most difficult aspect of major change has little to do with getting the right concept, core process redesign, or even a team at the top". Because first-line managers directly oversee the majority of human resources within the organisation, the way in which managers perform is paramount.

As expected, Becker *et al* (1996) have found that commitment to supervisors is positively related to performance and is more strongly associated with performance than commitment to organisations. "Watson Wyatt's 2001 Human Capital Index study shows that superior human resources practices are not only correlated with improved financial returns, they are, in fact, a leading indicator of increased shareholder value" (Kay & Kay, 2001). As part of the managerial chain, first-line management seems to require a breadth of unique core competencies for productivity/performance achievement at the grassroot level.

5.2.1 Performance at the Grassroot Level

Grassroot level performance readily relates to the overall productivity of, not only the organisation, but also the national level. This view is supported in government statements which acknowledge that it is only at the lower organisational levels of corporations that productivity can be enhanced (Gagliano, 1998; *China Daily*, 1998; Obuchi, 2000). A potent example relates to Singapore which has a goal to sustain a long-term annual productivity growth of 4% or more; it is prepared to meet these expectations by "the development of a world-class workforce committed to productivity by the implementation of best practices at the corporate and industry level" (Singapore Productivity and Standard Board, 1999). It appears, therefore, that changes in productivity at the national level must be tackled at the lower organisational levels.

A body of evidence indicates that change has to take place at the scale of individual work units or teams (Pearson, 1992; Campion *et al*, 1993; Cohen *et al*, 1996). Beer *et al* (1990) finds that programmes, implemented on a corporate scale, usually fail; this points to the need for focusing on smaller entities in order to achieve successful

implementation. A decade later, Beer (2001) shows that changes in organisational capabilities and culture tend to arise firstly in units at the periphery of the company. He affirms that fundamental innovations in organising and managing people that make for suitable competitive advantage have to be fashioned in each sub-unit of the organisation. It seems indisputable that performance at the grassroot level contributes to the overall productivity of an organisation. In short, there is a link between the tasks and activities to be performed at the departmental or unit level and the role of the first-line-manager.

5.2.2 The Effect of Span of Control

The first-line management level controls the largest number of direct reports. As an example, for an organisation with a minimal span of control of seven and the three levels of management, the percentage of direct reports can be calculated (Table 5.2).

	Persons at that level	Cumulative headcount	% of total
Top Management	1	1	0.2
Middle Management	7	8	1.5
First Line Management	7 x 7	57	11.0
Regular Workers	8 x 49	449	87.0

Table 5.2 Headcount by Organisational Level

As can be seen, the fact that over 87% of human resources report to the first-line management level establishes its importance in the corporate framework. As organisations take a 'flatter' profile, the percentage of people reporting to first-line managers increases accordingly. Whether flatter or not, "wider spans of control mean that supervisors now have so many subordinates that it limits the time and energy they can devote to any as individuals" (Capelli, 2000). This impact compounds the challenge

which first-line managers face and bolsters the importance of the position. The "demands on the incumbents has been such that First-line management is the level in the organisation from which come the most frequent reports of incompetence, burnout and excessive attrition" (Hill & McCullough, 1998). As first-line managers constitute the largest management entity, constituting at least 85% of the managerial structure, their roles become critical on two counts: the sheer number of people they directly oversee and the fact that they represent the largest group within the managerial structure.

5.2.3 The Distinct Value-Added of First-Line Managers

The difficulty of the tasks to be performed by the first-line managers cannot be minimised. Their world is a microcosm of managerial practices but also incorporates its distinct value-added. In order to ascertain the crucial aspects of the position, theoretical models are reviewed.

The Hoshin model illustrates the typical Japanese management perspective in relation to the respective roles at the different levels of management (Figure 5.4).

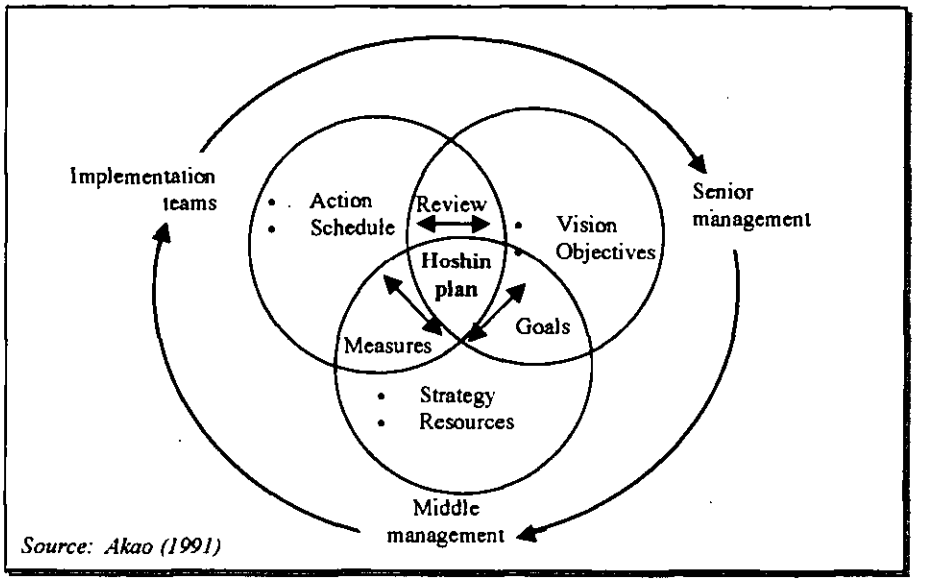
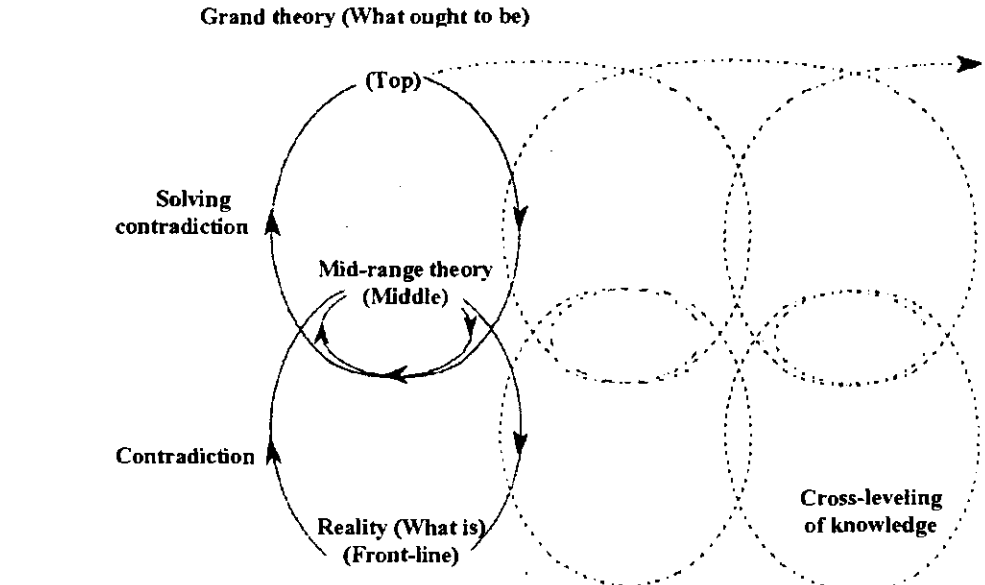


Figure 5.4 The Hoshin Model

According to Akao (1991), senior management is responsible for establishing the 'what' of the business system, namely its vision and core objectives. As can be seen, middle management would then negotiate with the first-line implementation teams regarding goals and the performance measures to indicate progress. They, in turn, are empowered to manage the action and schedule their respective activities. Another way to explain the process is that senior management determines the corporate direction, middle management translates this into a plan and first-line management and the team operationalise that plan in terms of activities. The process is continual, with each level of management making its respective contribution.

The middle-up-down model by Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995) describes the ever-continuing process taking place between all three levels of management (Figure 5.5). It illustrates the unique contribution between all levels of management as well as the flow of information that binds them together. During various plant visits by the author, such as Fuji-Xerox, Toyota and Ricoh, this model was observed in the form of corporate,

divisional and plant goals, overall objectives as well as specific action plans and yardsticks; these were prominently displayed in the working area of each of the respective teams.



Source: Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995)

Figure 5.5 Middle-up-down Model

The two models purposefully demonstrate the interactive nature of the management process which involves the management as a whole, referred to by the French as 'les cadres'. Needless to say, first-line managers are the critical link.

5.2.4 The Critical Link in Vertical Communication

Middle managers and supervisors play an important role in transmitting information and envisioned change throughout the organisation. Individually, they create and establish the practices and rewards that are necessary to sustain change in their areas of responsibility. Without their full understanding and commitment, the concept of Total

Organisational Change (TOC) is doomed (Schneider & Brief, 1996). The supervisor is the ground level implementer of company policy: the mouth piece of 'management'. The effectiveness with which first-line managers are able to navigate company policies and maintain healthy working relationships with subordinates is greatly dependent on the foreman's skill level and attitude (Axtell *et al*, 2000). The goals of middle managers and supervisor groups must be congruent (Schneider & Brief, 1996). Conflicts between team goals and broader organisational goals will not only obstruct the change but may breed resistance to it (Schneider & Brief, 1996). Strebel (1996), in his analysis of change programmes comments that there is little alignment between senior managers' statements and the practice and attitude of lower level managers and their subordinates. The lack of congruence between levels of management further underlines the crucial role of first-line managers as a key link in the management chain. Any passivity, resistance, conflict or disconnect between levels of management only restrain the organisational progress.

Over time, authors have acknowledged the challenge of interfacing between the two entities of management and labour (Hill & McCullough, 1998). Garvin (1986) realises the importance of first-line supervisors because of their unique organisational position "characterised as men in the middle, walking a tight rope between management and workers". The level of skills implied is recognised, more recently, by Birkhead *et al* (2000) and JIN (2001).

As the position requires a pro-active role, front-line managers have evolved from being "efficient implementers running mature operations" to "engaged entrepreneurs contributing to a shared commitment" (Wolff, 1999). The pivotal position of the cell leader or line manager in the implementation of novel strategies and tools has been

recognised for some time (Daniels & Burns, 1997). Such an example is value management where it is of utmost importance to keep up the spirit of continuous improvement in the organisation (Savolainen, 2000). A case study by Savolainen (2000) indicates that line management – production managers – "seemed to be the most important inside the company for spreading ideas to workers. Production managers acted as simplifiers and concretisers". Not only is the function to convey information but also to translate the message into operational actions.

Concurrent with the need to manage productivity at the lower level is the issue of adequate preparation and training of first-line managers, a critical aspect for successful implementation. According to Pfeffer & Sutton (1999):

> Regardless of the quality of the content, the delivery, or the frequency of repetition, management education is often ineffective in changing organisational practices. Superior management practices are reasonably well known, diffusion proceeds slowly and fitfully, and backsliding is common. Essential knowledge is often transferred between people by stories, gossip, and by watching one another work.

Thus, the momentum of an organisation is very much dependent on the congruence and communication between levels of management.

5.2.5 Setting a Sense of Direction

Supervision plays a key role in providing a sense of direction for the subordinates and, as Williams (2001) states, "Leadership is crucial in the clarification of an organisation's mission. Every supervisor ought to create and establish the practices and rewards that are necessary to sustain change in their areas of responsibility". The essence is to provide not only a sense of purpose and hope for a better tomorrow, but to ensure also integration of effort and common direction. Strebel (1996), in his analysis of change

programmes comments that there is little alignment between senior managers' statements and the practice and attitude of lower level managers and their subordinates; these can prove a serious impediment. The role of the first-line manager as communicator, interpreter and facilitator is an important part of the daily activities, especially in relation to goals.

5.2.6 Motivating Subordinates

The way people feel about their jobs is greatly influenced by management through business strategy and organisational policies, and supervisors through their procedures and general treatment of employees (Brewer, 1996). Hence, the findings of a study of workers by Herzberg *et al* (1993) have been divided into satisfiers or motivators and dissatisfiers or hygiene factors. The motivators relate to that unique human characteristic akin to the ability to achieve and experience psychological growth. The hygiene factors reflect the built-in drive to avoid needless aggravation from the work environment, such as:

a. Company policy and administration
b. Supervision
c. Relations to supervisors.

These key dissatisfiers are of particular interest because of their clear connection to supervisory personnel. Schermerhorn & Garner (1990) and Longenecker *et al* (1998) agree that:

Performance = ability x motivation x support

All the elements of the equation are directly influenced by first-line managers. However, Windbush (1999) points out that an ethical climate is created and sustained based primarily upon supervisory initiatives. Kidder & Bloom (2001) believe that if there is no sense of thrust in the organisation, people are preoccupied with protecting their backs, and creativity will be one of the first casualties. Indeed, both creativity and contributions by workers are key. Ideas generation is found to be more highly related to individual characteristics than to group and organisation characteristics; the implementation of ideas is more strongly predicted by group and organisational characteristics. According to Axtell *et al* (2000), those individuals who experience greater leader management support, higher team methods, greater diversity of responsibilities, innovation encouragement and higher levels of participation are those who have reported that more of their suggestions are put into practice. Consequently, supervisors ought to encourage individuals to not only contribute suggestions and ideas but to ensure an appropriate climate for implementation.

A major consequence of ineffective managerial support can quickly create barriers to workforce productivity, such as communication breakdowns (Longenecker *et al*, 1998). Reiger (1995) points out that, as far back as the Hawthorne studies, evidence shows that interpersonal relationships are the primary factor that determine productivity rates. It also relates how women expressed high regard for the type of supervision they experienced and spoke negatively about the usual treatment previously received from supervisors; they were now able to discuss work-related issues freely with test-room supervisors. These examples serve to underscore the importance of the relationship between superior and subordinate.

Other aspects including administration, interpretation and application of company policy are the responsibility of the immediate supervisor. Livingston (1988) asserts that managers' expectations of subordinates largely determines performance. The concept of high expectations is propounded by Hill (1985) who states that supervisors' expectations get communicated, even unintentionally. The more confidence expressed by managers, the more likely subordinates will make choices that are more difficult and entail a greater level of risk (Knight *et al*, 2001). First-line managers are both a product of their environment and propagators of the culture – the critical link in the management chain.

5.2.7 Influence on Goals Setting

Reiger (1995) points out that the quality of interaction between supervisor and subordinate is a greater factor than originally anticipated. Locke *et al* (1988a), in their analysis of the determinants of goal commitment, acknowledge that legitimate authority affects a subordinate's behaviour. For example, in a study by Ronan *et al* (1973), supervisors of logging crews, who stay on the job after assigning goals, obtain higher productivity from their crews than those who assign goals to their crews but do not remain on the job with them (Locke *et al*, 1988a). "As assigned performance goal signals what the person assigning the goal considers to be achievable, and such a signal is likely to influence individuals' or teams' own efficacy perceptions" (Locke & Latham, 1990). As Bandura (1997) suggests, those who judge themselves to be most efficacious are those most likely to take on risky or challenging activities; teams possessing greater confidence in their ability to perform should be more willing than others to undertake risky strategies, because they believe they can implement them successfully. The conclusion is that the influence of the supervisor extends beyond the tasks and demands, and includes an interpersonal element.

Goals determine the definition of success and failure and thereby affect the calibration of gain and loss (Knight *et al*, 2001). It seems, therefore, that first-line management impacts on goal setting and goal achievement in at least two ways:

a) the message of confidence implied in the expectations conveyed, and

b) the nature of interaction between superior and subordinate.

Williams (2001) stresses that to manage something implies the existence of goals that provide direction and criteria for evaluation. Bandura (1997) and Knight *et al* (2001) agree that assigned goals not only serve as guides and motivators for performance, but that they also help build and strengthen a sense of efficacy, both among individuals and teams. According to Shapira (1995), managers can proactively affect the expected value of their choices. This can be achieved by building followers' self-confidence, self-efficacy and self-esteem. Leaders who develop the human potential of their subordinates are expected to have a strong and positive influence on followers' levels of identification, motivation and goal achievement (Shamir *et al*, 1993; Klein & House, 1995; Gardner & Avolio, 1998; Jung & Avolio, 1999). The nature of goals and the level of expectations convey the priorities and degree of confidence of the manager. According to Schrader (1997), role relationships are a defining feature of influence on goals. In their analysis of the determinants of goal commitment, Locke *et al* (1988a) acknowledge that legitimate authority affects a subordinate's behaviour. The level of interaction, presence and support, conveyed by the first-line manager, greatly affects the responsiveness of subordinates.

5.2.8 Developing Human Resources

A very important element of performance management is the development of human resources. Ulrich (1998) defines intellectual capital as equal to the product of competence and commitment. He states that "many firms have invested heavily in helping them learn through formal training programs and centres; much more occurs in structured on-the-job experiences". Leaders are expected to develop the human potential of their subordinates and, hence, "supervisors must work with their subordinates, through coaching and on-the-job training (OJT), to develop the skills and motivation necessary to achieve the desired performance" (Heisler *et al*, 1988). Personal development is much more effective when conducted in the job context (Kopelman, 1986), which implicitly involves the first-line manager. In order to achieve the targeted performance level, OJT seems to be the preferred mode, a key role of the first-line managers, as trainers to meet long-term objectives. Not only is the training important, but the environment and the quality of interaction also are, to a large degree, influencing factors.

5.2.9 Ability To Fulfil Multiple Roles

Performance management is concerned with the total process of directing, encouraging, and controlling human resources productivity in the organisation (Heisler *et al*, 1988). Hellriegel *et al* (1998) acknowledges that technical proficiency, time management as well as the ability to be the interface between corporate management and subordinates are distinct areas of expertise required of first-line managers. Yet, Dorgan *et al*, (2001) identify three major causes of failure in enhancing productivity in organisations: to implement management techniques, to set goals and to attract high-calibre managerial talent. The definition of performance management by Spangenberg & Theron (2001) is composed of goal setting, ongoing coaching and development of subordinates,

performance reviews and recognition, with the distinction being the process of the performance management system itself, which includes:

1. Mission, goals and strategies are clarified or developed and communicated to all employees.

2. Goals and performance standards, related to wider organisational goals, are negotiated for teams and individuals.

3. Structures are designed and redesigned at organisational, process and team/individual levels to ensure effective functioning of the entire organisation.

4. Performance at the organisational, process, team and individual levels is measured, with feedback provided on an ongoing basis and with problem-solving mechanisms in place.

5. Ongoing and regular performance reviews are scheduled for individual employees with training and development needs being identified and coaching conducted.

Mentoring, feedback of results, modelling and other such forms of reinforcement constitute a major portion of first-line managers responsibilities (Rheems, 1995; Williams, 2001). From these statements, it is clear that the role of first-line managers is an integral part of the organisational dynamics. The interplay between variables is depicted by a model, provided by Hellriegel *et al* (1998), which shows the interaction between the different areas of activity and the areas of core competencies required (Figure 5.6).

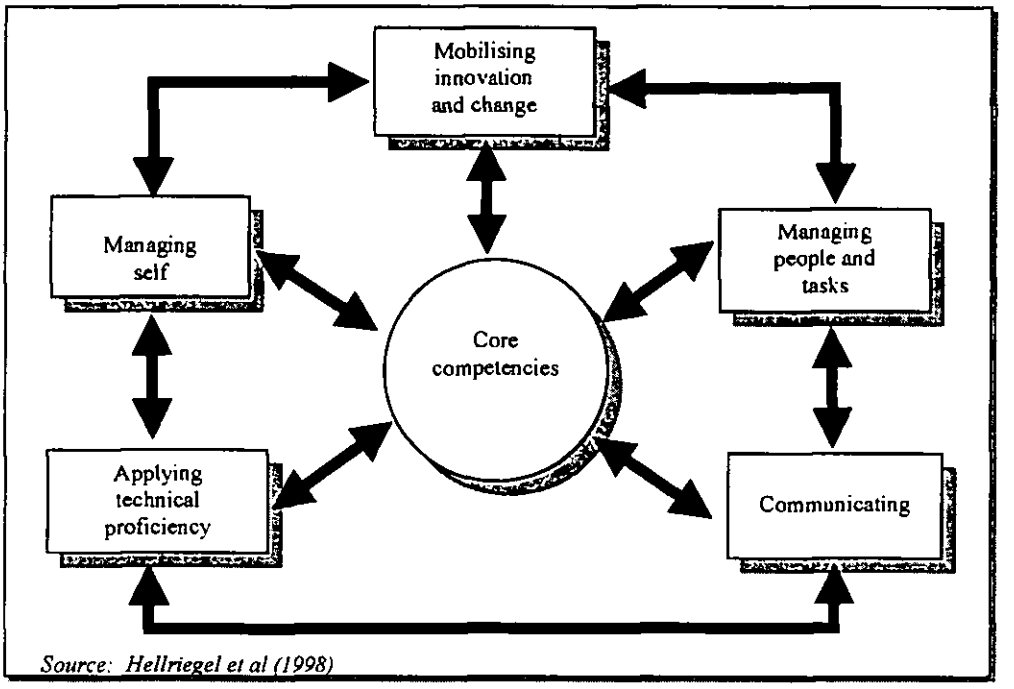


Figure 5.6 Professional and Managerial Core Competencies Model

As can be seen, the complexity of a first-line manager's job is compounded by the challenge of communicating both vertically with superiors and horizontally with peers and subordinates. In order to perform effectively, the first-line managers must be adequately prepared and well trained to cope with the challenges. For example, Judson (1982) reports that The Gray-Judson-Howard Consulting Group finds that, of 236 top-level executives surveyed, 41% admit to an insufficient investment in management and supervisory training and development and 35% acknowledge that first-line supervision is weak. The difficulty to fulfil these roles, as reflected by the responses of subordinates in identifying the relationship with supervisors as a major dissatisfier, is affirmed by Herzberg *et al* (1993).

5.2.10 Supervisor's proficiency and credibility

The personal characteristics of the first-line managers and their impact on goals have been aired. However, in the area of training, there comes the point where both supervisor and subordinate have to meet to ascertain each other's challenges, as exampled by telecommuter and manager (Grensing-Pophal, 1999). In analysing employee commitment, Benkhoff (1997) states that "employees who regard their superiors as competent, who like the leadership style and who trust the superior, report significantly more often that they share the values of the organization and feel proud to be members. If managers are concerned about keeping their valued employees, they should ensure that workers have competent and trustworthy superiors and feel treated fairly and with respect, and should not put employees under too much pressure". Similarly, Becker *et al* (1996) find that commitment to supervisors is positively related to performance and is more strongly associated with performance than the commitment to the organisation. Each of these studies reflect the need for credibility and competence of first-line managers. Yet, despite the importance of the role, "often little guidance is offered to the cell leader in terms of maximizing the results of the continuous improvement which is seen as essential to the shop floor and operations management" (Daniels & Burns, 1997).

5.3 THE SUPERVISOR'S DILEMMA

Given the number of roles and conceptions of what constitutes a goal, many permutations are possible. These variances can be influenced by the existing corporate climate, management styles, ideological premises, as well as the supervisors' own background and assumptions. Therefore, it seems evident that the values that affect the organisational climate as well as the styles of management should be explored.

5.3.1 The Corporate Climate

The values of an organisation are conveyed by the relative importance and choices being made. The corporate climate and values of an organisation play an important part in providing the context in which first-line managers operate. Tett *et al* (2000) advocate that the issue of managerial behaviours differ in organisations as a function of situational factors such as level, function, industry and should be explored. They believe that such pursuits are expected to guide improvements in the fit between individual managers and the demands of management as well as promote more precise and complete understanding of the nature and bases of managerial effectiveness.

The organisation's perception of the value of training also needs to be considered. "Managers' perceptions of the relationship between training and learning are shaped by the bureaucratic culture of their employing organisations, and their concern to conform and comply in order to sustain their security and career progression. The relationship between training and learning is perceived to be strong when individuals seek to address organisational priorities" (Antonacopoulou, 2001). As far as Maruca (1996) is concerned, "managers are often driven by internal pressures to act as fire fighters, fixing problem after problem, with only short-term performance in mind. Training is not considered because downtime, while workers are in the classroom, affects overall performance". Therefore, the value placed upon human resources is readily visible by the investment made in the development of people.

It seems inevitable that it is through people's efforts that organisations can achieve a competitive advantage. This view is supported by Pfeffer & Tromley (1995) who reveal the importance of measuring efforts; after all, measurement is a critical component of

any management process for three reasons: (1) it provides feedback, (2) it ensures that what is measured will be noticed and (3) it affects behaviour. It is no accident that companies seriously committed to achieving competitive advantage through people make measurement of their efforts a critical component of the overall process (Pfeffer & Tromley, 1995). Part of the challenge is to measure what matters. Pfeffer & Sutton (1999) remark that organisations tend to relate to the past and spend little time in discussing root causes in order to improve past performance. The tendency is to measure outcomes instead of processes. If organisations are serious about turning knowledge into action, they should measure the knowing-doing gap itself. The difference is in the day-to-day management practices that create knowledge and embody a culture that values the building and transfer of knowledge and, most importantly, act on that knowledge. As such, the first-line manager, as coach and cheer leader, plays a crucial role in creating a conducive climate for success.

5.3.2 The Styles of Management

Notwithstanding the problem of title comparability, different styles of management also affect roles and expectations. The context in which leaders operate is also very much a function of corporate and national labour practices. These help define the first-line manager's role. While some practices are best typified by labels such as 'North American' (Bailey & Chen, 1997), 'Japanese' (*The Economist*, 1995; Ogbonna & Harris, 1998; Bhappu, 2000; Fujimoto, 2001), or 'Swedish' (Rehder 1990; Berggren, 1993), they are not limited to these national cultures. Some have been successfully implemented in other countries by parent companies, typically labelled 'transplants', and are used to describe a style of management, the best examples being Nissan UK, NUMMI and Saturn.

Practices can influence the perspective of the first-line manager with differences, perceived as either management or worker prerogatives, in areas such as recruitment and selection. Differences in managerial decision prerogatives can best be illustrated by the decision criteria used in the selection of supervisory personnel (Table 5.3):

1) In North America – past performance and potential of individuals being considered are claimed to be the major criteria for promotion (Fiedler, 1996); judgment is usually made by the immediate supervisor and possibly include the next level of management.

2) In Japan – the Human Resources staff are key in the deployment of human resources (Lorriman & Kenjo, 1996). For the first ten years, one major criterion is seniority. Immediate superiors may not even have an inkling as to who will be assigned to the positions reporting to them at the time for job rotation.

3) In Sweden – based upon the Volvo experiment, as well as in some forms of 'empowered teams', the group leader is elected from within the team by the team members (Berggren, 1993).

Each of these management practices incorporates different implied value systems which eventually affect the job concept of first-line managers.

Management Decision	North American	Japanese	Swedish
Appointing entity	Direct superiors and 1-2 levels higher	Corporate H.R. Staff	Selected by team members
Selection criteria	Past performance and potential	Seniority and past performance	Peer compatibility
Relationship with management	Authority levels based on position	Consensus	Team decision
Labour practices and contracts	Negotiated at company level for the benefit of the members intra-industry pattern	Negotiated at company level to the benefit of employees	Negotiated at the national level
Goal setting	Negotiated at each level of management	Determined at middle management level	Team driven

Table 5.3 Managerial Decision Prerogatives

Labour relation practices and contracts are fundamental to the values of an organisation. In the Japanese system, the one-company unions have, as their main focus, the long-term survival and success of the organisation and, as Mestre (1999) affirms, first-line and middle management are part of the company's union. Unity and harmony are critical to the well-being of the organisation. Compared to recent events in Canada with the negotiations in one corporation with six different unions, four signing individual contracts, one dissenting, and one going on strike which almost brought the company to the brink of bankruptcy, the contrast to Japanese practices is evident.

Within any style of management is the style of leadership. In their review of leadership and productivity, Masi & Cooke (2000) point out that transformational leaders selectively arouse the motives of followers, which in turn yield enhancement of the intrinsic value of goal accomplishment. They also add that transformational leaders tend to empower and motivate subordinates while transaction leaders suppress subordinates commitment to quality and productivity. "Transactional leaders are managers of what they have in hand and make incremental progress, making best use of given resources. Transformational leaders have a teaching role. They elevate, motivate, define values, offer vision, and creatively produce reform" (Abshire, 2001). These differing perspectives in leadership philosophies are encapsulated in the concept of teams, employee empowerment (Mueller, 1994; Dew, 1995; Kirkman & Rosen, 2000) and the role of supervision (Cohen & Bailey, 1997). "Leaders of empowered teams must play the role of coaches and facilitators, helping teams define tasks, structure activities, and monitor their own progress. Relinquishing power and control does not come easily for many leaders" (Kirkman & Rosen, 2000). These illustrate the wide range of perceptions that confront first-line managers.

The issue of power ought to be incorporated in the debate. While in the North American context each manager has clear delineations as to the scope of decisions that can be made, for the Japanese the concern is for consensus which requires each person to fully inform others to ascertain support for the proposal. In the 'empowered team' it is the group that assumes the responsibility for reaching decisions. It seems that the seat of power can be vested at different levels in the organisation. As Ouchi (1981) claims, different sets of values about individuals play an important role in this context. Looking at the styles of management from the point of view of the first-line managers, the way they value individuals is not only crucial but also affects the managerial decision prerogatives.

5.4 FIRST-LINE MANAGEMENT, JAPANESE STYLE

This section limits itself to three aspects of Japanese management practices that directly relate to the first-line management and performance. The corporate responsibility to fully develop human resources, the concept of goals at the group level, and the team versus the individual unit of measure, are all key aspects of Japanese corporate values and practices, directly affecting the work climate and the roles of first-line managers.

According to Morris *et al* (1998), the ideal type of Japanese supervisor would be a high-school graduate, with ten years in company experience, systematically trained in technical and supervisory skills. They purport, however, that supervisors in Japan and the UK display a startlingly different profile, where the former exhibits superior preparation as well as being older and more experienced than their UK counterparts. Such characteristics are not the result of a fortuitous event but are of a deliberate process.

5.4.1 Responsibility to Develop Human Resources

One key distinction of the Japanese first-line manager's role is in the nature of the relationship with subordinates both on a professional/work context as well as on a personal/ private life level. In Western organisations, workers have generally taken for granted the distinction between corporate or work-life and personal life. This separation between work and personal domain has to be respected by managers, and any intrusion in personal life is construed as inappropriate. However, in the Japanese context, the starting assumption is that the whole person has to be addressed. In their analysis of the Japanese management techniques, Ala & Cordeiro (1999) explain the importance of *narugakae,* (Appendix C) which is "the total man concept, leading to the total emotional participation in the group". "In traditional Japanese companies, college grads get hired at the same time, receive the same training, are promoted at almost the same time, and the same kind of salary" (Fujimoto, 2001). "The corporation offers them dormitories when they are young and single, and social clubs throughout their lives; it even tries, informally, to find them a wife from within the corporate family" (*The Economist*, 1995). "The corporate employer is seen by the Japanese *salaryman* as their dependants, and managers, as a second parent" (Rehder, 1990). A comprehensive socialisation process, as described by Mestre *et al* (1997) and Ford *et al* (2001), indoctrinates the individual in order to meet all the needs of the individual employee. An extensive orientation process inculcates the individual in the ways of the corporation.

The first-line management role in the Japanese framework is unique in the area of human relations. It is best illustrated in the practice of some companies whereby each supervisor receives a specific amount for entertainment expenses for their subordinates,

with no expense reports required nor audits made on amounts spent. If there is any risk, it is on the part of the supervisor who may have to spend some of his own money.

Tied to the social responsibility aspect is the active on-the-job development of subordinates. It is *giri*, or sense of duty, "which causes present-day Japanese managers to devote perhaps 20% to 30% of their time to personally developing their staff. It is part of the Japanese ethos of mutual obligation" (Lorriman & Kenjo, 1996). The role of the supervisor is that of friend, father confessor, guidance counsellor, and so on. The success of the supervisor is dependent on his ability to help his subordinates thrive and to promote a sense of unity and team spirit. To be able to meet the needs of these roles, supervisors will receive the necessary training.

An often neglected definition of management is "getting things done through people" (Whitehill, 1991). The individual's success is measured by the overall success of the group. However, an effective leader is not always a top achiever; he/she is a catalyst, coach and source of inspiration for his team. Group members tend to look to their group leader as good caretakers, and the expectation is particularly high of a *kacho* to whom a number of the rank and file report day to day (Sai, 1995). According to Ohno (1988), managers and supervisors in a manufacturing plant are like the team manager and the batting, base, and field coaches. In short, human resource management and development is a most significant dimension in Japanese management.

5.4.2 The Training of Supervisors

Corporations do not assume that skills are innate but believe that they must be inculcated. "Put quite simply, the most important responsibility of a manager is the

development of his staff. Managers have to be appointed predominantly because they are expected to be good at giving time to developing their staff; they must be trained to do it well, and their rewards and promotion must be intimately connected to their success or failure in so doing" (Lorriman & Kenjo, 1996). Appendix A, the typical Japanese training programme as well as two actual corporate programmes are found; they illustrate the comprehensive nature of training at all levels of the organisation.

These training programmes address areas of the supervisory responsibilities. Suzaki (1993) identifies six types of skills that must be developed in order for individuals to be able to self-manage, grouped into two categories:

a) Task-oriented Skills related to
   - maintenance
   - specific tasks

b) People-oriented Skills related to
   - self-improvement
   - problem solving
   - teamwork
   - managerial interface.

The whole management process is built around the human dimension and a value system that stresses participation. The training that first-line managers receive reflects these skills requirements, placing special emphasis upon the human dimension. The training includes such topics as understanding one's role as a manager, understanding and developing of oneself, problem-solving in the workplace, improving relational skills; many more are covered in a variety of training programmes and self-study. The content of any such module is fascinating; for instance, in the concept of understanding one's role as a manager, taught modules are entitled:

- What is advice?
- The reality of communications
- *Kakoragamae* as *senpai*

- Tips on teaching
- How to discipline and praise

The importance of training is best illustrated by Lorriman & Kenjo (1996): they quote Hitachi's policy statement on Education and Training:

> The foundation of our education programme, however, is On-the-Job Training. Managers and supervisors are responsible for the education of their subordinates through OJT. We believe that 'to hire a person and not train him is a failure of management; but that to train him and not be strict in guidance is negligence on the part of his superior'. **In order to have capable managers to provide OJT, there is an emphasis on training supervisors to ensure that they will be able teachers.**

From this corporate example, which is typical of industry in general, Rehder (1990) states that managing the new non-traditional models involves the integration and co-ordination of strategy, systems, structure, culture and human resource subsystems within a complex, changing environment. He continues by saying that "Japanese managers are skilled at building a shared vision and goals appealing to higher needs. They train their workers extensively in problem solving, and expand their job responsibility by cross-training in teams". Not only are managers assiduously trained, but the training content is focused on the values and philosophy of the corporation as well as on the role expected of the managers.

5.4.3 Goals – The End Toward Which Effort Is Directed

In the analysis of performance and goals, the actual choice of focus is deemed to be material by the organisation. According to Lorriman & Kenjo (1996): "Job descriptions of managers in Western companies are almost invariably task-oriented; in Japanese companies they are always focused on the responsibility of managers to develop the skills of their staff and to foster good communications and teamwork – in other words,

process – rather than task-oriented". Such a perspective serves to show the totally different expectations placed upon Japanese first-line managers. "In *genba*, the supervisor manages inputs to produce outputs. First and foremost, supervisors must manage their people. Shuichi Yoshida, a *kaizen* consultant, claims that supervisors should not act like prison wardens looking to find fault and administer punishment, but should act as tutors and look after subordinates... The importance of working with people, developing subordinates, are all done in an effort to improve, not to criticise" (Imai, 1997). The choice of focus between the end or the means is very much placed upon the latter by Japanese organisations as far as first-line managers are concerned.

A salient difference is goals specificity. Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995) point out that, the goals that come down from the top are usually philosophical and vague. "It is for the subordinates to adopt their Boss's perspective and figure out what he would do". Their 'middle-up-down' model provides a helpful framework which applies to goals. The challenge for first-line managers is to work out the reality of the available resources with the 'ought-to-be' goals for the plant set by the corporation.

5.4.4 Measuring Group Performance

Within the Japanese context, a question surrounding goals for first-line managers level is the extent to which these individuals have the prerogative to set their own goals. Yoshimura & Anderson (1997) point out that performance targets are for groups, not for individuals, and are usually crystal clear. What remains ambiguous, hence, is the process by which they are reached. Meeting goals is taken for granted; the characteristic Japanese preference is to focus on the process rather than the results. Suzaki (1993), indicating the close relationship between skills and goals, states that "As people's skills

are upgraded, the goal-setting process will also be upgraded ... When daily, weekly, monthly and yearly reviews are well orchestrated and coordinated, will they compound the power of the people working together as a well trained body functions"? Given that goals are pre-ordained by upper management levels, the emphasis is placed upon making the most of the available resources through problem solving.

Indeed, making group performance visible is part of the equation. Greif (1991) demonstrates the prominence of public commitment by the use of visual means such as the Andon board which displays the current state of production. According to Suzaki (1993), the progress of any team is transparent to the rest of the organisation through a variety of techniques, such as morning meetings, one-minute talks, weekly team meetings and story boards. In addition, Mestre *et al* (2000) define a territory for each team, including specific areas for teams' activities, story boards relating responsibilities, track record and goals; this enhances the ownership, by individuals as part of a team, of goals and results. Visibility of problems and results with recognition of success reflect an openness towards change and ownership of performance.

The values of group dynamics are many, an aspect of which is peer pressure. Horizontal co-ordination may make individual contributions ambiguous, specifically in terms of output, but as Aoki (1994) claims, if workers can mutually monitor actions of others, the horizontal co-ordination of efforts among workers may improve the collective workers' performance. The ultimate in carrying the concept of a unit can be found at Kyocera Corporation which is modelled on the image of an amoeba, as small and adaptable units. "A typical amoeba buys everything from outside the company or from other amoebas. Each amoeba shares in the passion of the amoeba leader, and is evaluated by its hourly

efficiency – the average added value per work-hour of its members" (Inamori, 1995). In using such a model, the objective is that synergistic forces will come into play and the performance of the group is greater than the sum of individual contributions. It appears that, once a decision has been made, the whole organisation is mobilised and will work until the task is accomplished.

5.5 IN SUMMARY

Undoubtedly, first-line managers, in terms of the complexity of their job which places high demands upon incumbents, should be recognised as playing a vital role in business. The contradictory expectations placed upon them and their position, often maligned by management and labour alike (Leiter, 1948; Bonner, 1959; Patten, 1968; Fletcher, 1969; Hill, 1973; Wickens, 1987), cannot be ignored. These need to be revisited (McKinsey, 1999a). The necessity for adaptability and rapidity to change point to the need for better trained, highly motivated, people-effective first-line managers. In relation to goals, first-line managers help to unify human resources, clarify functions and duties as well as develop subordinates' potential. Their personal proficiency and credibility further enhance the performance of the group. It is not surprising, given the tall challenges, that the pressures are high. The demands also take their toll.

The conclusion is not to neglect the vital link that first-line management represents. Managers learn to mentor subordinates because of the favourable effect on performance and commitment. As far as Williams (2001) is concerned, goals and supervision interact. The expectancy theory of motivation is particularly useful in this context (Porter & Lawler, 1968). One implication of these results is that researchers and human

resource professionals concerned with employee performance, should focus their efforts on commitment to supervisors, rather than on that to organisations (Billings *et al*, 1996). According to Katzenback (1996), the real change leaders, who affect how the majority of people perform, are in the ranks of middle and frontline managers with their ability and attitudes. The most difficult aspect of major change has little to do with getting the right concept, core process redesign, or even a team at the top. It lies in changing the people system – the skills and behaviour of hundreds of employees down the line. When performance and goals are examined, first-line managers have to be the prime consideration.

PART II

THE METHODOLOGY

Part II consists of three chapters. Chapter 6 describes the design of the survey instrument which incorporates questions which explore each of the elements of the Generic Performance Model presented in section 3.8.5 and culminates with the purposed questionnaire. This chapter also describes the rationale for the construct of the questionnaire, with the phrasing and sequencing of the questions being addressed in the light of the two populations surveyed. Moreover, the implications of qualitative research are compared to those of quantitative research. Chapter 7 looks at the issues of survey robustness, especially in relation to the administration of the survey, the adequacy of the sample, and issues of comparability. Chapter 8 discusses the actual protocol followed in the analysis of the responses. Generally accepted phenomenological procedures are described, starting with the reduction of the responses into descriptive categories and levels of abstraction and ending with conceptual mapping procedures. Then, the actual procedure is described in terms of this study.

Chapter 6	Chapter 7	Chapter 8
The Development of the Questionnaire	Survey Robustness	Protocol for Analysis

CHAPTER 6

THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

"Ask me no questions, and I will tell you no lies."
Anonymous

"A 'sunao' mind enables you to see things as they actually are without adhering to one way of thinking."
(Landman, 1984)

6.0 PREAMBLE

The Generic Performance Model (see section 3.8.5), delineates the key components of the performance process which are the actual perceptions of goals, the individual's and environmental characteristics which affect performance. The resultant effects of these factors on performance are also conditional on recognition/feedback. In order to explore the perceptions of first-line managers as to the effect of these components on performance, questions needed to be developed which allow for the exploration of a full range of possible responses. This chapter concentrates on the thematic content of each question and its actual construct of the questionnaire.

The challenge was to develop an instrument that would provide insights on the actual nature of goals and the impinging factors that affect performance. Such insights would shed light on the actual differences between theory and practice, as well as assist both practitioners and researchers alike, in bridging the potential gap between the perceptions and real situations.

6.1 FORMAT OF THE SURVEY INSTRUMENT

The selection and design of the questionnaire take into consideration the multi-dimensionality of performance and goals. As pointed out by Antonacopoulou (2001), there is a "need to move beyond linear representations to capture the complex web of reciprocal, non-linear interactions and relationships between individual and organisational processes." The chosen approach was to use phenomenological research methodology which, as Osborne (1990) reveals "is to understand a phenomenon by allowing the data to speak for themselves, and by attempting to put aside one's preconceptions as best one can." Consequently, it was decided to use open-ended questions for the following reasons:

1) to permit freedom of expression on the part of the respondents to raise as many and various topics as is appropriate.

2) to reduce the researcher's interjection in determining the nature of goals and the factors affecting outcomes.

3) to assess the perception of first-line managers without reference or insinuation to corporate practices or programmed responses.

4) to solicit responses reflecting the true perception of respondents while minimising any inference as to the 'desired' response or programmed answers.

5) to allow for a wide range of responses, while using a limited number of questions.

6.2 TOPICAL AREAS EXPLORED UNDER INVESTIGATION

The overarching consideration applied to the development of the questions is that they should provide the greatest latitude for the respondents. While the Generic Performance Model identifies the areas to be investigated, some of the questions may solicit inputs which may relate to more than one part of the model. This section explains how each of the model's components are explored by means of the various questions.

6.2.1 Goals/Demands/Expectations

An individual's perception of performance can take any combination of outlooks. At one end, they can convey the concern for performance and relate to specific aspects of the person's responsibilities. Appropriate performance measures reflect a performance orientation by their specificity, such as annual percentage increase in sales, an increase in profitability, and so on. Such measures include a time element, a quantitative dimension and an accountability component. At the other end, they may indicate a more passive attitude, responding to day-to-day demands, such as: 'The boss expects me to perform so that everybody will be happy; so that I can do a good job'. This is not a negative response, but affirms that the person does not necessarily have an orientation of either clear goals and objectives or clear timing. The need to allow for such wide range of responses leads to question #2 such as: "What were your Boss's expectations when you took this position?"

Goals and accomplishments can take either a job oriented or a personal outlook. It was felt that this duality needed to be explored. The responses could, and have, fallen into several categories, exampled by: 'Well, I've got to decide if I am going to stay in this company because the position I am in is a dead end street', or 'Well I have increased my customer base this year, now I need to improve the profitability that will increase the dollar amount of the accounts that I look after'. These two types of responses clearly demonstrate a difference in goal outlook, one focusing on personal concerns, whilst the other is on the corporate interest. Question #8 such as 'What do you expect to accomplish this year?' does not specify any sort of answer other than to leave the respondents the choice as to how they verbalise their outlook.

For individual vs. group goals, the questions have to allow for responses which could cover either or both. During the development phase of the questionnaire, based upon many conversations dealing with the phrasing of the questions, it was decided to use the word 'expectations' rather than 'goals'. In relation to accomplishment, the responses would help diagnose the actual focus of first-line managers and compare them with the definitions provided in the literature. Any disparity between theoretical or experimental constructs, and the results of the tabulation of the actual responses, should be addressed by both practitioners and academics so as to bridge any gaps identified.

6.2.2 Individual's Characteristics

Managerial preparation relates to the sense of personal adequacy and, hence, the perceived needs of the managers in order to adequately cope with the tasks they were called upon to perform. Responses could encompass personal and technical skills required to administer functions. Bandura (1997) and Steele-Johnson *et al* (2000) points out that self-monitoring, self-efficacy and self-evaluation are relevant to goal orientation effects. Self-efficacy is a state-based expectation, that is a judgement about the likelihood of successful task performance measured immediately before any effort is expended on the task (Gardner & Pierce, 1998), and is a personal judgement of how well one can execute courses of action required to deal with the situations (Bandura, 1986; Strajkovic & Luthan, 1998). Vancouver *et al* (2001) duplicate the strong positive correlation between self-efficacy and performance, as identified by Phillips & Gully (1997) and Stajkovic & Luthans (1998). The latter purport that the "general ability has been found to be the best single predictor of performance (Hunter & Hunter, 1984; Ree *et al* 1994). Ability has also been found to predict self-efficacy (Thomas & Mathieu, 1994)".

Hence, it is material to ascertain the current perspective of the individual as it pertains to any lacunas in their preparation for the demands of their current position. Two underlying assumptions are that, firstly, the persons answering the question would know what they lack in background knowledge and that, secondly the individuals have a clear understanding of the requirements of the position in order to properly address the demands. Question #3: "What kind of training do you wish you had in preparation for this position?" allows for the assessment of the respondents' perceived needs.

6.2.3 Environmental Characteristics

In order to explore the various areas which might affect the perceptions of the respondents in carrying out their responsibilities, it seems that, according to Berkowitz (1996), "Subsidiary questions can be developed from a single overarching question, each representing a somewhat distinct way of getting at answers to the main question. This strengthens the overall design by providing several different, yet overlapping, lines of approach". To avoid inferring any desired response as to factors which might influence performance of the manager and the department, both positive and negative aspects were sought. This approach is similar in nature to the questions utilised by Herzberg (1991) when investigating the degree of satisfaction with work. Questions, such as 'The world isn't perfect, what's bugging you? What is it that would make it a lot easier?' 'If certain things went away, what would improve your performance, and that of your department?' would reveal frustration; conversely, those such as 'What can be done about the work situation which would make it better?' would reveal the areas needing attention, as well as the type of support required. By probing in different ways, the responses, verbalised differently, provide a fuller picture, and cover a gamut of topics from personal, organisational and technological challenges and opportunities. By their nature, they can

furnish insights as to factors which first-line managers consider as affecting performance. Questions #4, 5, 6, 7 and 10 explore these various aspects, positive or negative, which are construed by the respondents as relevant.

6.2.4 Performance

Performance could be considered as the 'black box' in system theory. Neely (1998) defines performance as the record of outcomes produced on a specific job function or activity during a specified time period. Williams (1998) states that the term 'performance' applies to output, behaviours and inputs. The propinquity of goals and outcomes make it difficult to uniquely define or explore performance other than through the interpretation or comparison of targets and measured results. Moores (1994) shows that within each organisational level they are like two peas in a pod (Figure 6.1).

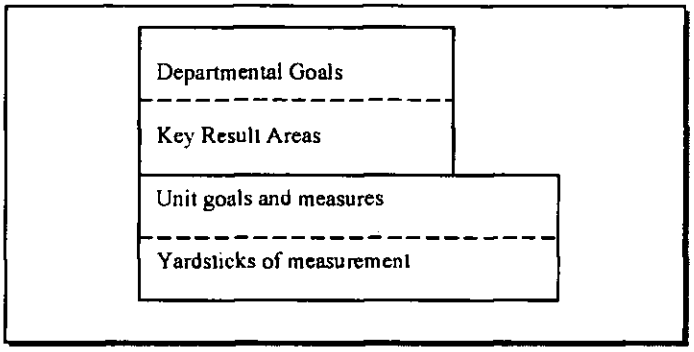


Figure 6.1 Duality of Goals and Performance

Similarly, Locke & Latham (1990) link performance and demands "task performance will be high on whatever dimensions the goal specifies as important". McShane (1998) refers to task performance as goal-directed activities that are under the individual's control. It relates to the process and interaction between goals, environmental and individual characteristics, combined with the nature of the operation headed by the first-

line manager, and yields certain results. The cause-and-effect may not be readily known, but the results hopefully trigger some form of feedback which allows the organisation to modify its inputs accordingly. For these reasons, the issue of performance is answered by the nature of goals (Questions #2 and 8) and questions assessing the outcomes (Questions #4, 5 and 9).

6.2.5 Recognition and Feedback

Individuals expect their performance to be recognised. Performance is greatly influenced by the environment in which individuals operate. The two sides of the spectrum in relation to performance is either 'individuals saying that they would like to do something, but hold no hope that their performance will be recognised' or 'individuals may anticipate a combination of public recognition, promotion, salary increase or bonus'.

Tied to the issue of performance is not only recognition but also feedback. "Goals and feedback together lead to higher performance than either one alone. Responses are made not just on the basis of past outcomes but also on the basis of anticipated future outcomes" Locke & Latham (1990b). Furthermore, Lussier (1999) asserts that the relationship between the manager's behaviour and the employees performance appraisals is one of the manager's important and most difficult functions, which eventually affects absenteeism, turnover, morale and productivity.

Question #9: "How do you expect your performance will be recognised" specifically addresses recognition. Questions #5: "What are typical gratifying moments?' and

Question #10: "What would make your job fantastic?" allow for responses which address the topic of recognition in a less direct fashion.

6.3 GENERAL INFORMATION

A certain amount of background information, generic in nature, was collected, covering such factors as title, years of experience, nature of the department, size of the organisation and type of business. It served the purpose of putting respondents at ease by having to answer questions which were more a matter of fact than introspection.

The types of industries represented ranged from banking institutions, government, hospitals and manufacturing operations. All functional areas, such as sales, R & D, production, administration and logistics, are also represented. The size of operation is quantified in terms of number of employees in the organisation. The mode of management for large corporations might differ from that of small businesses of less than 150 employees as communications and group dynamics change (Dunbar, 1992; Gladwell, 2002). However, questions attempting to determine whether size means better management are beyond the scope and purpose of this research. The information needed for adequate analysis would require detailed knowledge on such areas as organisational practices and performance over time, of both the organisation and department of the respondent. Information about work environment, rank, discipline and so on would require the collecting and building of an extensive database.

A factor that could influence the responses is the level and quality of experience of the respondent. In the preliminary test questionnaires, several forms of questions were used to explore the level of experience such as number of work years, years in a supervisory

capacity, service in one company or various companies and length of time in the current position. Indeed, the richness of experience is a function of the training received as well as of the quality of supervision and OJT. In fact, a person could have a supervisory position without the title of first-line manager. The issue of semantics - supervisor, lead person, foreman, etc., adds to the difficulty to assess not only the present level of responsibilities, but also previously held positions. Of course, each company may have its own practices and titles. Therefore, the general information collected can only be used as a general background information. Any analysis would require a greater amount of data beyond the scope of this research.

6.4 THE QUESTIONNAIRE ITSELF

Various design aspects of the questionnaire had to be considered. The phrasing of the questions was particularly a challenge in order to assure equivalency of meaning as the survey instrument was used in two diverse languages/cultures.

6.4.1 The Phrasing of the Questions

It is recognised that the phrasing of questions is important. "One of the initial cognitive acts by a survey respondent upon hearing a question is the attribution of meaning. This step of comprehension involves the retrieval from semantic memory of relevant facts concerning meaning of words and phrases. It also involves recognition of the implicd meanings of combination of words" (Groves *et al, 1991*). As the main purpose of the research is to explore the current perspective of the respondents, it was felt that the questions should be phrased within the framework of their present position. As such, it

was then decided that each respondent would assess his/her own needs, desires and ambitions.

There were several steps involved in the development of the questions (Table 6.1). Initially, face to face interviews have been conducted to ascertain equal interpretation of the questions by Canadian respondents. Once the phrasing was established, the issue of translation was then tackled.

Phase	Process	Output
Interview of Canadian first-line managers	Face to face interview define by survey areas	Initial survey form
Focus group testing wording with responses	Testing of various wording as to responses they would trigger	Revised version in English
Review of questions with Japanese Managers in the Vancouver area	Identify problem areas in answering questions from a Japanese perspective	Revised version in English
Survey tested with Japanese managers at the U. of Washington MBA program	Applying the survey in a focus group	Initial version in Japanese
Review of survey instrument in Nagoya with professors and managers	Translated survey back into English to ascertain the actual meaning and spirit in which the questions would be interpreted	Final session in Japanese

Table 6.1 Evolving Phases of the Survey Form

6.4.1.1 Establishing the Wording and Testing of the Questions

It was decided to carry out a pilot study in order to design an efficient questionnaire; this was no easy task (Oppenheim. 1966). In the first place, interviews were conducted with Canadian first-line managers in order to ascertain that the wording would provide a broad range of responses. Secondly, due to the complexity of the issues in the phrasing of questions, brainstorming sessions were carried out with managers in order to test how the wording might affect the responses. All contending questions were screened to fit into the topical areas of the Generic Performance Model. Various responses triggered different facets of relevance that helped to formulate the questions for the survey; these needed to encompass the full range of responses possible. Thirdly, Japanese managers in the Vancouver area were contacted to discuss the issue of goals in the Japanese context. From these visits, a clearer understanding of the Japanese management process underscored the need for a broad conceptual definition of goals.

6.4.1.2 Assuring Equivalency of Meaning

Cross-cultural studies are beset by comparability problems in the measurement of concepts. The translation issue has two dimensions: (1) *Literal exactness* and (2) conceptual equivalence. The former refers to the mere existence of literally equivalent words in different languages and provides no guarantee of conceptual equivalence (Lincoln, 1989). It was felt that it was necessary to ensure that **all** the questions meant the same to **all** respondents.

Given the lack of empirical evidence from which to generate questions concerning the perceptions and perspectives of Japanese managers, the help of a focus group composed of 20 Japanese first-line managers, studying for the University of Washington MBA

programme, was solicited. The use of such a group is a widely accepted technique for the development of questionnaire items for exploratory studies (Wade, 1978; Morgan, 1988; Fry, 1997). The wording of the questions had to be revised many times to avoid ambiguity for both the Canadian and Japanese respondents. For example, from the Japanese perspective, it became obvious very quickly that those involved found the concept of individual goals, in the context of their workplace, difficult to answer; as a result of conversation with them, it was decided to substitute the word 'goal' with the term 'expectations'. In Canada, using an equivalent sample, the responses to the questions indicated no difficulty. Based upon these outcomes, the questionnaire was then reviewed by Japanese professors at a number of Nagoya universities as well as by business managers. The process was that each individual translated the Japanese version into English. The spirit of each question was discussed in order to assure conceptual equivalence. The purpose was to further ascertain the content validity of the translation as well as to identify any potential pitfalls that may arise in the administration of the main survey.

In order to truly understand the Japanese responses in the context of their managerial practices, 48 corporate interviews, as well as discussions with Japanese professors from 17 universities were conducted. For example, at Noritake, the Vice-President, Head of Administration, which includes the Human Resources Department, and several of his subordinates explained their corporate practices in human resources development, orientation, and, as well, provided the overall yearly plan for the continual development of human resources. This discussion was followed by a plant visit. During such visits, management practices, such as visual communications (Mestre *et al*, 2000), were discussed as well as observed. In addition, visits to Japanese plants located in the

U.S.A., Canada, China and England, have provided the database in order to ascertain the transferability of management concepts between countries. Companies which emulate Japanese practices, such as Rover, Saturn, Boeing, and British Aerospace, to name just a few, were also visited.

The combination of interviews, visits both at home and abroad as well as reading on issues related to goals, productivity and factors related to the Generic Performance Model, has contributed to the backdrop to the analysis and interpretation of responses. It also helped to formulate an overview which would integrate the various aspects of the Model into a cohesive representation of the management process involved.

6.4.2 Sequencing of the Questions

As with every questionnaire, it is recognised that, in addition to the phrasing of the questions, their sequence might influence the responses obtained. The generic type of information is factual, non-threatening forms of data. Opening questions can be crucial in gaining the confidence and cooperation of respondents (Malhotra, 1996). Therefore, the decision was made that the first questions would relate to the boss's expectations and, hence, should not create any defensive response nor require the divulging of any sensitive material. Inevitably, questions in a sequence may influence the responses to the subsequent ones. For this reason, the two questions concerning goal perceptions were interspersed in the questionnaire in order to avoid any set pattern which might condition the individual to answer along a certain frame of mind. The last two questions relate to the sense of accomplishment as indicated by recognition and ascertaining any persistent factors which detract from total satisfaction with the job. The topic order reflects both

the priorities of the research and that of potential respondents so as to assure a higher response rate (Roberson & Sundstrom, 1990).

6.4.3 Layout and Time

It was felt that the questions as well as answers should fit on both sides of one sheet of paper, so as not to overwhelm potential respondents (Dommeyer, 1988). This was of particular concern from the Japanese standpoint where responses would be first contemplated to provide an accurate perspective. Part of the design consideration was also the time element normally required in the completion of the questionnaire (Roth & Bessier, 1988). Given that the questions are open-ended, the number of pages or number of questions are less relevant than the time required to answer the question. It was decided, based upon generally accepted practices, to keep the time required to under 30 minutes (Monette *et al*, 1990).

6.5 THE ACTUAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Taking into consideration the discussions made in relation to content, phrasing and translating, sequencing and so on, ten pertinent questions emerged for the final questionnaire to be used in the survey. These were preceded by simple, factual information about the respondent, namely position, department, type of Business and, lastly, total number of employees in the company. The questionnaire is presented in Figure 6.2.

Confidential Survey

Position: _____
Department _____
Type of Business: _____
Total No. of Employees in the company: _____

1. How long have you been in this position?
2. What were your Boss's expectations when you took this position?
3. What training do you wish you had in preparation for this position?
4. What are typical frustrations to your job?
5. What are typical gratifying moments at work?
6. If you had a magic wand--what are the problems that if they went away, would greatly improve your own performance?
7. If you had a magic wand—what are the problems that if they went away, would greatly improve your department's performance?
8. What do you expect to accomplish this year?
9. How do you expect your performance will be recognised?
10. What would make your job fantastic, that you would be eager to get to work every day?

Figure 6.2 The Actual Questionnaire

Using the Generic Performance Model as the blueprint for the development of the questionnaire, Figure 6.3 illustrates how each of the questions fit the model. The topical areas of investigation are represented within each element of the Generic Performance Model.

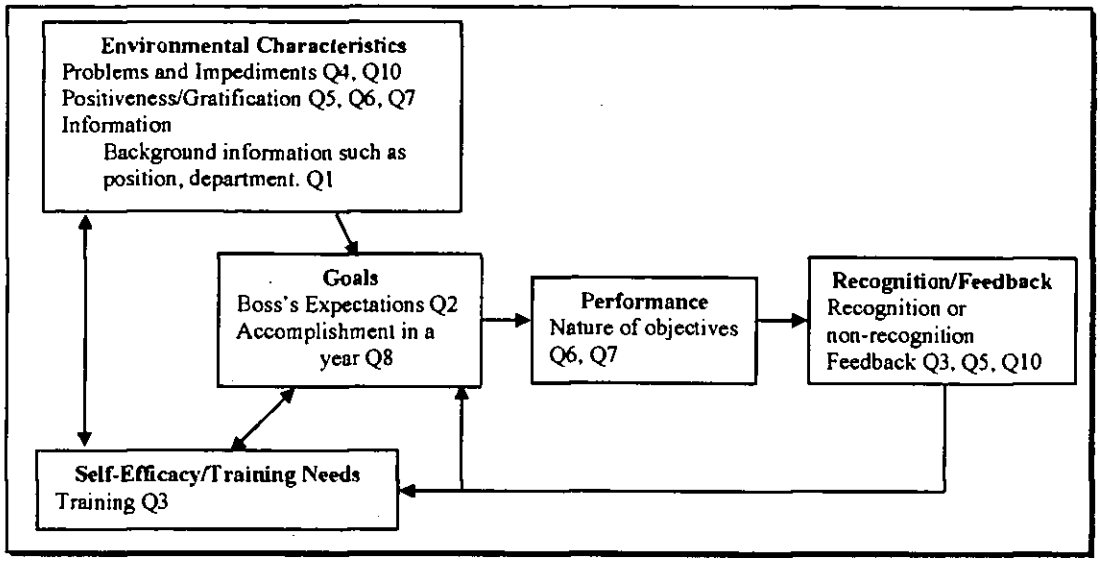


Figure 6.3 Areas of Investigation within the Generic Performance Model

6.6 QUALITATIVE VS. QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH

As already intimated, it has been decided to carry out the investigation into goals and first-line management through qualitative rather than quantitative research. The reasoning is explained as the related implications are imparted.

6.6.1 Implications of Quantitative Research

Two basic concerns were identified at the start of this research which needed to be addressed. The first was the sheer volume of data that would be required if causal relationships are to be established, given the number of variables involved. The second was the absence of previous research upon which the questions of the survey instrument could be patterned.

6.6.1.1 Volume and Availability of Data Required

A number of criticisms aimed at past research identifies the demand for new insights which would take a holistic approach, encompassing a wider number of dimensions. Although there is general agreement on many of the variables affecting performance / productivity, the difficulty is not at the conceptual level but in measurement and availability of statistical information. In this research, due to the variances in the factors involved, the number of variables affecting productivity explodes exponentially. For each questionnaire collected, corresponding unique measures of performance, which are relevant to both the job of the individual responding and the different corporate settings, would have to be in place. Thus, the measurement of cause and effect becomes impossible when dealing with over 300 companies, in a multitude of industries, with managers whose responsibilities, resources, and accountabilities are all dissimilar.

As observed by Wheelan *et al* (1998), commenting on productivity, research at the macro level, national or firm, and at the individual worker level, is quite extensive; yet, productivity research that employs the work group as the unit of analysis is not. The complexities of establishing the cause and effect of independent variables on dependent variables, like performance and productivity, have precluded previous research to explore such relationships. No effort has been made to collect any productivity statistics due to of the enormity of such a task. If the concepts are applied in real life at the micro level to smaller organisational units or heads of departments, a multitude of measurements would be necessary to assess both the changes in productivity and the factors which contribute to these changes. Often, such statistics are not available on either count.

Other than the sheer magnitude of data to be collected, an assumption would be that the information is available, in a format and form consistent across companies. The lack of universality of measures, even in a given industry, would prohibit such an effort. Beside the magnitude of the task in collecting such data, the assumption is that such information is being collected, for or by the respondents, for their respective area of influence, a totally unrealistic expectation.

An area of difficulty is related to confidentiality. Most corporations view their data as proprietary; such intrusions would be perceived as breaking corporate trust or would necessitate permission for use. The confidentiality of corporate/organisational data also precludes such efforts (Mitchell, 1998). It would also require divulging the identity of the organisation and, most probably, that of the individual, which may sway people's willingness to respond or perhaps actually bias their answers. For this reason, no effort was made to inquire into, or quantify, performance results.

Thus, it is clear that the practicalities of establishing cause and effect neither fit the objective of this research nor the feasibility of the mechanics of determining such relationships. The first and foremost objective of this research is to provide a topology on the focus of first-line managers in their 'goals' outlook.

6.6.1.2 Void of Previous Research

Acknowledged in the literature is the lack of primary data on the nature of goals. Taking into account the range of possible answers having yet to be determined and the lack of data on which to design questions requiring quantitative answers, the use of a format that would allow the quantification of observations was thus precluded. As a result,

phenomenological techniques have been chosen to provide insights on and explore the topics of interest.

6.6.2 Features of Qualitative Research

A wide range of topics, verbalised in a variety of ways, makes each response not only unique but also multi-faceted. This was a concern right from the start when analysing responses to open-ended questions. It is non-causal research (Smith, 1987) as it describes responses from managers. According to Reeder (1996), the verbalisation of a response on a certain topic by an individual does not attempt to quantify the magnitude/relative importance of that factor. The response of an individual does not preclude the presence or possibility for other factors to be present, but represents the respondent's view of what he/she considers most pertinent. Hence, the use of Phenomenological Research.

Hussel (1960) points out that phenomenological philosophy was intended to be a science of consciousness. Evidence shows that how a person construes the stimuli can have more influence upon behaviour than behaviour manipulation (Osborne, 1994). As the purpose of the questionnaire is to determine the goal orientation and nature of these goals, the descriptive approach proves more desirable than traditional science criteria of measurement and prediction. The choice seems to be between (1) pre-set responses which, in essence, direct the interviewee to a limited number of choices with the opportunity to complete the category 'other' and (2) responses to open-ended questions which need eventually to be interpreted and tabulated. The latter was chosen since the desire was not to bias the responses of the person completing the questionnaire. While the difficulties are many and the work involved increases, the benefit is that the

undirected responses focus on the respondent's, rather than the researcher's, interest. This decision proved to be most rewarding in the analysis of responses in different cultural settings; evolved patterns, unexpected in a Western setting, would never have been anticipated, such as the great emphasis placed by the Japanese on the development of subordinates, which is non-existent in the Canadian responses. Though initially not fully appreciated, the difference in the perception of work assignments, duties, and roles is another reason for opting for open-ended questions.

The collection of qualitative data embodies certain strengths. As pointed out by Miles & Huberman (1994), "One major feature of qualitative data is that they focus on *naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings*, so that we have a strong handle on what 'real life' is like. *Local groundedness*, the influences of the local context, are not stripped away but taken into account. The possibility for understanding latent, underlying, or non-obvious issues is strong, with strong potential for revealing complexity". This advantage proves to be a real asset given the many facets of management and differences between Japanese and Canadian practices. It would have been difficult, at the time of designing the questionnaire, to anticipate all potential responses for the two populations. While many would attribute such differences to culture, it is impossible, *a priori*, to state which aspects of the managerial process, values or cultural practices would be reflected in the responses. For example, the case could be made, based upon the goal theory and the success in productivity improvement by certain Japanese industries, that the Japanese first-line managers would have been much more goal-specific oriented than their Canadian counterparts; such pre-supposition would have introduced a bias in the research.

As far as Sommer & Sommer (1991) is concerned, an open-ended format is desirable:

a. when the researcher does not know all the possible answers to a question,

b. when the range of possible answers is so large that the question would be unwieldy in multiple choice format, and

c. when the researcher wants to avoid suggesting answers to the respondent.

Lee (1993) believes that it is also appropriate when asking about sensitive topics, particularly if one is interested in the frequency of behaviour. In the case of this survey, the respondents have to indicate their goals, frustrations, form of recognition, if any; each of these topics could be considered sensitive. Some employers could view the responses as confidential, or stringing out one's dirty laundry, and sensitive because the responses could be embarrassing to one's superior. Given the contextual nature of Japanese management (Mestre *et al.* 2000), open-ended questions provide the leeway for respondents to answer within that context.

Questionnaires allow individuals to respond in writing. As pointed out by Bradburn (1983), "Contrary to common belief favouring face-to-face interviews, there is no clearly superior method that yields better results for all types of questions." Because of the number of actual responses and the richness of the data collected, it would have been prohibitive from a time perspective to conduct personal interviews. Moreover, the language barrier would have made this research impossible.

Salience refers to the importance of an issue in people's minds, hence the usefulness of employing open-ended questions. It is generally assumed that in answering an open-ended question, those items that stand out in a person's mind will be mentioned first (Sommer & Sommer, 1991). In their respective world, individuals may respond with a

varying degree of detail or have different skill levels in expressing themselves. For example, Question 2: "What were your Boss's expectations when you took this position?" ties in with Question 8 "What do you expect to accomplish this year?"; both aim to ascertain the performance outlook of the individual. Question 4, which looks at the typical frustrations of the individual's job, ties in with Question 7 which asks: "If you had a magic wand, what are the problems that, if they went away, would greatly improve your own performance?"; both focus on the factors which respondents feel as impinging on their performance.

As an overview, open-ended questions seem to be the ideal medium to discover the respondents' frame of mind in the area of goal orientation. Other forms of questions, which may have allowed easier processing, were impractical from (1) the point of view of introducing potential bias, (2) the number of questions which would have been required to cover the same number of responses, and (3) the lack of conclusive material which would have provided an inclusive list of areas to be explored.

6.7 IN SUMMARY

Based upon the need to determine first-line-managers' perceptions of the expectations placed upon them and to identify key factors which they perceive may enhance or impede their performance, open-ended questions prove to be the most appropriate means to accomplish this aim. Great effort was expended, not only on the phrasing and sequencing of the questions, but also in assuring that the equivalency of meaning would be respected. In addition, randomness and range of the samples was ascertained in order to assure a wide and comprehensive variety of responses.

CHAPTER 7

SURVEY ROBUSTNESS

The man who sees both sides of a question is a man who sees absolutely nothing at all.
Oscar Wilde

7.0 PREAMBLE

The survey should meet two key criteria: validity, and reliability. Certain administrative aspects of a survey can affect the validity of the findings. Internal validity is the degree to which a procedure measures what it is supposed to measure whilst external validity refers to the generalisability of the findings. According to Osborne(1990), the validity of a phenomenological researcher's interpretation can be assessed by describing the procedure and data analysis, checking the interpretation for goodness of fit, the presentation of coherent and convincing arguments with findings which resonate with experience of other people. The administration procedure is reviewed in this chapter, namely:

a. the administration of the survey,
b. the adequacy of the survey sample,
c. the comparability of the information between the two populations surveyed, and
d. the comparability in levels of management.

Research should also be reliable (Grimes & Schulz, 2002) and, as Sommer (1991) states, it refers to the repeatability or replicability of findings. One aspect of reliability can be determined by comparing the consistency between the findings of each question. In addition, comparison to other published works also addresses the question of

replicability. As reliability is context bound, the responses to the questions should be reviewed in the context of each of the two populations.

7.1 THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE SURVEY

The robustness of the results can be affected by the distribution and the sources of the samples. The main issue is to provide a neutral stage where individuals, firstly, did not feel threatened, concerned with being identified or coerced into playing back the company line and, secondly, can truly answer questions in a candid manner. This is even more so relevant in Japan where employees are expected not to embarrass the company and be part of the 'family'. The diversity of respondents in both countries would need to represent a broad cross-section of the two populations.

7.1.1 Distribution of the Survey Forms

Among the several alternatives considered in order to collect the data, three emerged as prominent. The first alternative would have been to post the questionnaires directly, using a prepared mailing list. This method was not selected for two reasons: (a) the economic consideration – assuming that a mailing list targeting specifically first-line managers would not be available, only 10% of the responses could possibly meet that criteria. Secondly, assuming a return rate of 10%, a total of 80,000 surveys would need to be sent to assure the receipt of a total of 800 completed forms. The associated cost of such an approach is conservatively estimated at over £80,000; (b) the personal approach – in Japan, unless the personal approach is taken, the response rate would have been even lower. The second alternative was to provide the questionnaires directly to corporations and solicit their assistance in the distribution process. The experience of this researcher

in Canada is that such attempts were declined by organisations for a number of reasons, the most prevalent being the deluge of such requests on corporations. Also, this approach might have conveyed that the survey was sanctioned by the organisation being contacted and, hence, the responses may not have been as candid. The third alternative was a networking sampling procedure. According to Lee (1993), a sampling procedure implies that the researcher starts from an initial set of contacts and is then directed to others, who in turn refer others, and so on.

It was decided to use the latter for this survey. In Canada, students from Trinity Western University were assigned the task to distribute the forms to individuals who met the first-line manager criteria. A letter of introduction, using the letterhead of Trinity Western University was supplied to authenticate the legitimacy of the survey. In Japan, individuals, known to the researcher, were asked to distribute the questionnaire to friends, relatives and acquaintances who met the first-line manager criteria. A letter to authenticate the research was also provided, introducing the researcher as a Visiting Scholar from Canada at Nagoya University.

Appendix D includes a list of Japanese corporations and universities which were visited. At every opportunity, the assistance of various individuals was solicited. In addition, social groups, professional associations and English conversation groups were also contacted. Responses were mailed back for the attention of the researcher, who was stationed at Nagoya University for a period of four months.

7.1.2 Selection of the Respondents

The method to contact potential respondents, both in Canada and in Japan, was left to the discretion of the individuals distributing the questionnaire, with the instruction that these individuals be first-line managers. In some cases, the people contacted passed on copies of the forms to other individuals who met the criteria. In Japan, the selection of potential respondents was more limiting because of the language barrier. The general practice of Japanese people to ask people at a 'similar station in life' as one's own is another factor, especially when personal relationships are so important. For example, it was pointed out that students should not be asked to distribute the survey questionnaire as, automatically, people would not take the research project very seriously. When a graduate student was asked to pass the questionnaire to acquaintances, he replied that none of the people he knew of a similar age were in such positions and, when urged to ask parents, relatives, or neighbours, his response was that it would be unthinkable and bad manners.

In both the Canadian and Japanese cases, each returned form was reviewed on two counts. The first was to review the title of the individuals; the second was to ascertain that, from the responses, the individual truly exercised supervisory responsibilities. This was particularly important with individuals whose titles were unspecified or non-descriptive. Further details on the screening of the forms is provided in section 7.4.

7.2 THE ADEQUACY OF THE SAMPLE

In order for this research to be valid, the survey had to meet basic criteria. The main ones relate to a sufficient sample size and randomness in the selection of respondents.

7.2.1 Sufficient Sample Size

One question regularly raised in qualitative research is that of sample size. Researchers in the field of phenomenological research are consistent in establishing size parameters. For qualitative research, it is preferable to employ theoretical sampling of small numbers of people chosen for their special attributes (Coyne, 1997; Yardley, 2000; Sobal, 2001). In this research these individuals would be first-line managers. Yardley (2000) mentions other studies with 20 to 30 as sample size of the target population. Similarly, Luborsky & Rubinstein (1995) suggest that "in practice, from 12 to 26 people in each study cell seems about right to most authors". Research on sample extensiveness by Sobal (2001) shows a similar range; he quotes Britten (1995) as stating that: "the upper sample limit rarely includes over 60 people". The difference in size of sample from quantitative research stems from the difference in objective. Luborsky & Rubinstein (1995) acknowledge that sampling in qualitative research is central to social and humanistic inquiry. In their discussion, they point out that the purpose of sampling is for meaning: "The selection of subjects has its goal the understanding of individuals' naturalistic perceptions of self, society, and the environment. Here the goal is the elucidation of particular types of meaning or experience. The goal of sampling, in this case, is to produce collections of individuals from whom the nature of experience can be elicited through verbal descriptions and narration". In the context of this research, the responses of first-line managers are to describe their perceptions of expectations, along with the factors of organisational life which might impinge on results.

The completed forms were then screened to assure that all respondents met the criteria of first-line management. The process is fully explained in section 7.4. A total of 358 completed Japanese questionnaires were collected, of which 278 met the criterion set for

the level of first-line management; only three were returned blank. For Canada. 437 were collected, of which 314 met the managerial level criterion; no blanks were returned. From a validity point of view, it seems, therefore, that the number of responses. used in this survey, more than meet the sample size usually required under these guidelines.

7.2.2 Randomness of the Sample Taken

The resulting sample collected reflects a cross-section of industries, size of organisations as well as functional disciplines. Since the individuals distributing the forms were from various walks of life, the actual diversity in the characteristics and location of the respondents confirm the randomness. For example, in Japan the cancellation stamps on self-addressed envelopes to the researcher's attention at Nagoya University indicate that most came from within a radius of 150 miles, that is from Kobe to the outskirts of Tokyo, an area highly industrialised and the seedbed of Japanese industry. In Canada, given the greater geographic area, the responses came from as far as 3000 miles away; 80% came from the greater Vancouver region.

7.3 THE COMPARABILITY OF THE TWO POPULATION SAMPLES

While the purpose of phenomenological research is to identify types of responses with causal relationships not being the primary objective, it was felt that, nevertheless, comparability of the populations of Canada and Japan is justified. The information collected includes comparability in relation to the type of industry, company size, discipline/occupation, with particular emphasis on the levels of management.

Coincidentally, Terpstra & Rozell (1994), in relating overall organisation performance, as measured by the use of MBOs and corporate profitability, did not find any significant differences to be attributed to industry type nor organisational size. While their study uses statistics at a macro level, corporate vs. individual or departmental level, the results of their analysis shows a correlation between annual profit and profit growth with goal setting. Such findings reinforce the idea that management practices supersede such issues as corporate size, industry type or national culture.

7.3.1 Type of Industry

Because of the differences in economic make-up between the two populations surveyed, it can be argued that the data is not comparable. In Canada, the greater Vancouver area is dominated by natural resources and service industries. In Japan, the wider area has a broad base of industrial activity. A way to resolve the issue is to determine if the responses are different for diverse industries; however, as no significant differences were identified, the data can be considered comparable – the implied assumption is that comparable industries would remove any differences triggered by the nature of the business.

7.3.2 Company Size

Based upon corporate practices, the size of an organisation might be suspected to be an indication of having explicit procedures so as to ensure that formal goals, performance measurements and resources are allocated for training and personnel development. However, the issue becomes more complicated when the responses are tabulated as company size can be deceiving. For example, one organisation had 110,000 employees

throughout 3,000 nationwide locations in Canada; which relevant statistic can be used. the total number of employees in the corporation or in one branch?

An issue of critical concern in the present study is the definition of corporate structure. Some corporations, such as the world famous McDonald's fast food chain, have a mixture of company-owned and franchised operations; the same can apply to real estate companies, removal companies, electronics stores and many more. Many have extensive training programmes for the whole network while others only provide advertising and purchasing services. In Japan, some corporations, such as Toyota, will assist their suppliers or daughter companies with manpower, possibly in the form of audits and training as well as transfer of personnel. While large corporations have their own programmes of best practice, smaller organisations have access to the same practices through local agencies. In the Japanese context, several associations, such as Nikkeren (1995), promulgate 'good managerial practices' among their members. Smaller corporations, which do not have the corporate resources to provide such employee training, have access to regional training centres. As an overview, little difference in management practices is noted between industries. Therefore, when the question of size related to managerial practices is analysed, many factors can affect the interpretation of the responses.

It appears that the only qualifier specified in both countries is that the respondent works for an organisation with at least 100 employees. The reason for this criterion is that, in the smaller organisation, the owner is usually a dominant factor and, hence, expectations may not be shared with the employees as close control is the unique domain of the

owner. Therefore, responses from organisations of less than 100 employees were eliminated.

7.3.3 Discipline/Occupation

Would the respective disciplines of respondents influence their answer? In Japan, because of the extensive job rotation procedures followed by many corporations and the corporate training programmes (Herbig & Jacobs, 1995; Lorriman & Kenjo, 1996), little differences in performance orientation of first-line managers from different disciplines would be expected. In the United States and Canada, individuals will often change employer and career path (Daft, 1999). It was, therefore, beyond the practical scope of this survey to require the work history and training of each respondent in order to determine his/her background.

7.4 LEVELS OF MANAGEMENT

Much of the literature dealing with "management" considers that group of employees as a whole, without distinction of the differences which might exist between levels of first, middle and top management. In addition, "management background of work and social life are taken-for-granted for over a century. This taken-for-grantedness is misleading. While management should be understood as a construction, there is little consensus as to how this is to be theorised (Grey, 1999). "How they do what they do has never been satisfactorily investigated, never mind resolved by research" (Hales, 2001). As pointed out by Hales (2001), the functions of first-line managers differ from those of middle and top management. In the context of this research, the focus is placed upon first-line managers.

Potentially, the nature of responses could be dependent upon the position of the respondents. In Canada and Japan, because of a lack of uniformity in titles or job content, a one-for-one comparison was precluded. It was felt, therefore, that the grouping of lower management or first-line management was appropriate. Based upon the definition generally accepted of first-line management as those managers being directly responsible for non-management employees (Daft, 1991), the two populations are comparable. The problems of semantics, title dispensation, comparability of responsibilities, union membership and allegiances, as well as job description are areas which are further explained in the following sections.

7.4.1 The Problem of Semantics

One difficulty is the comparability of titles (Phillips, 1985; Mallory, 1989; Fujimoto, 1994). The lack of uniformity in the use of titles can be best exemplified by the 'new' terminology, brought about by the concept of team management, such as regular workers are not employees but associates, foremen and supervisors are now team leaders. As an example, the labour contract of a Japanese transplant uses the terms unit leaders and team leaders in ". . .that all direct supervisory responsibility lies with the unit leader. A team leader is recognised as a resource available to the unit leader in the accomplishment of unit goals and objectives" (Toyota Collective Agreement, 1991). Different organisations will opt to develop their own terminology to reflect their unique management philosophy.

7.4.2 The Various Rationales for Title Dispensation

Criteria for bestowing titles also come into play. In Japan, an elaborate set of ranks means opportunities for regular advancement over a lifetime career with the same firm (Cole, 1979; Lincoln, 1990), designating status more than function and entailing, perhaps little real responsibility (Lincoln, 1990). A title may be more a function of perceived importance with the 'outside world' than the actual internal responsibilities and, hence, the title selection becomes a tool for public or employee relations rather than a label easy to interpret.

7.4.3 The Problem of Comparable Responsibilities

Comparability of responsibilities proves to be a challenge. Individuals may have the same title but their responsibilities may not be comparable, or vice versa. For example, the responsibilities of a produce manager in a supermarket may be comparable to a supervisor in a bank setting. Diversity of responsibility not only varies between industries, but also within an industry, as different organisations have different practices. The responsibilities of first-line management are not fixed and, as Wickens (1987) aptly states: "The role of first-line management or supervisor is changing from production chaser to group leader role including such responsibilities as output, cost, quality, housekeeping, teamwork, communications, etc." The model proposed in the *Hybrid Factory* by Abo (1994) suggests the current reality in many of the automotive factories and the trend for many other world class organisations is that "Supervisors typically have two main functions, managing the activities of the work team and technical supervision related to the smooth operation of the production line, including IE functions such as standard practices, changes in job assignments, etc". Thus, it is very difficult to define the population on the basis of responsibilities.

7.4.4 The Problem of Union Membership / Allegiances

In certain workplace surroundings, the individual may have line responsibilities, others may not. Some may be part of the 'union', others may be precluded from membership and considered as 'management'. In Japan, one main distinction about the status of employees is union membership; only those in the upper echelons of the company are not members of the union and general managers down to the ordinary employee are all members of the company union (Harmony, 1974; Rohlen, 1974; Whitehill, 1991; Hunt, 1995; Sai, 1995). Not only is the union membership important in terms of the realm of decisions, but also it colours the allegiances imputed to the position. However, in the United States, the Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 specifies that foremen are part of management. The two systems have different sets of allegiances and direct comparison between the two populations is thus complicated by the issue of union membership.

7.4.5 The Concept of Job Descriptions

In Western organisations, the built-in assumption is to think of individuals and job descriptions as tied to specific tasks. In actuality, if Japanese companies were to institute a system of job descriptions, these would have to cover the range of tasks that occur at every rank level within that department, and not a system like the American one that lists the tasks required of individual positions (Yamada, 1997). Yet, there is a flexible organisation of workers that is not governed by rigid job demarcations where workers, supervisors, and managers actively take part in every level of managerial and operational functions of the workplace with job tasks assigned to work teams. There is a notable absence of the fixed job concept that implies a single set of job tasks performed by a single worker (Abo, 1994). Many of the visited Japanese corporations indicated that they had to write job descriptions in order to meet ISO 9000 requirements. As an

example, in one location, when the question was asked: "How are the job descriptions related to the way you operate today?" the reply was: "We have them in conjunction with the way in which we operate our plant". In commenting on Japanese job classifications, Gow (1988) acknowledges the difficulties of job classification in a country where clear job specifications are uncommon. Cross-training and team orientation give organisations flexibility which, in-turn, influences the responsibilities of first-line management as these responsibilities are spread over a number of people within the team. The conceptualisation of individual jobs as compared to group responsibilities is another difference between the two populations.

7.4.6 Procedure to Ascertain the Level of Management

The initial step processing the responses was to ascertain the position of the respondents. "First-line management is the level just above workers, as represented, for example, by a foreman, shift boss, sergeant, section head, ward nurse" (Friedman, 2000). No comprehensive list or directory was found which could be used to determine which titles could be construed as first-line management. For example, The Occupational Outlook Handbook (2002-2003) lists dozens of titles, but provides no comprehensive list along the lines of levels of management.

For the lack of a standardised list, the actual sorting of the forms was based upon titles commonly accepted as first-line management such as supervisor, foreman, lead person and head nurse. Any form with a title not reflecting the "classic" definition of first-line manager was further scrutinised by reading the responses to the various questions to ascertain the actual level of responsibility. This procedure is consistent with the context of phenomenological research in the description of experience (Osborne, 1990).

7.5 VALIDITY OF THE FINDINGS

A key concern is to assess the validity of the findings. Creswell & Miller (2000) state that "triangulation is a step taken by researchers employing only the researcher's lens". In this research, the validity of the findings has to be established for each of the two populations. In addition, each of the various topics have their own body of literature. The findings to each question should be consistent with existing literature related to that specific area of research as well as the literature related the Japanese and Canadian management practices. The validity of the findings should demonstrate internal consistency between the responses to the various questions. The conclusions should allow for the comparison of the Generic Performance model and to ascertain how the first-line managers might differ in their perspectives as compared to an overall model which, because of its goal to encompass all, needs to be general in nature. In this research, the literature previously discussed dealing with goals, the importance of first-line managers and the various models presented will aid both in the interpretation of the results, and ascertaining the validity of the findings.

7.6 IN SUMMARY

While the purpose of this study is to ascertain the goal perceptions of first-line managers using a qualitative approach found in phenomenological techniques, every effort has been made to maintain the analytical criteria usually present in quantitative or causal research process to minimize the introduction of bias.

Internal validity is attested by the consistency between the responses found in the various questions as well as the corroboration between the findings of each question and the body of literature dealing with the various topical areas. The external validity is affirmed

by published material regarding the managerial practices of the two countries. The reliability, in terms of repeatability or replicability of the findings is also authenticated by the existing literature. In this process of triangulation, the consistency of responses between each of the various questions for each of the populations, consistency with the various theories dealing with for each of the elements of the Generic Performance Model, and the affirmation found in the literature pertaining to the management practices of each of the two countries attest to the robustness of the format, procedures, and questions utilised in this research.

CHAPTER 8

PROTOCOL FOR ANALYSIS

Life is the art of drawing sufficient conclusions from insufficient premises.
Samuel Butler

8.0 PREAMBLE

The protocol utilised for the analysis of the responses is composed of three sections. The first reviews some of the basic principles involved in phenomenological research. The second evaluates the theoretical literature germane to the tabulation process. The third applies the theory to the actual situation encountered in this study and explains the actual tabulation procedure followed, step-by-step. Moreover, an audit of the tabulation is presented.

8.1 PHENOMENOLOGICAL PREMISS

The analysis of open-ended questions capitalises upon a number of features unique to this format. It allows for the analysis of respondents' descriptions of experience and the elucidation of meaning (Osborne, 1990) by scrutinising the participants' perceptions (Polkinghorne, 1989; Porter, 1999b; Angen, 2000). According to Maheswaran & Shavitt (2000), the use of open-ended questions also allows for exploratory research in providing insights in variations of conceptualisation across cultures. "Open-ended questions are most useful when the researcher needs to know what people are thinking and how they naturally understand their world" (Cozby *et al*, 1989). Such advantages are very important when investigating in this study the differences between the Canadian and Japanese perspectives.

As pre-set constructs are not available, the analysis of the responses is very much the source of classification categories and, therefore, the intrinsic basis of the conclusions. It appears that "emphatic understanding rather than statistical explanatory procedures is the objective. The data are descriptions of experience. Phenomenological research aims at the elucidation of meaning and understanding of human existence from an individual's point of view" (Osborne, 1990). He also explains that phenomenological research is not intended to test an hypothesis; it provides descriptions of experience which are then interpreted by the researcher from a particular theoretical perspective. Luborsky & Rubinstein (1995) believe that the interpretative methods of qualitative research may not always be specific prior to data analysis activities. As far as they are concerned, no probability models exist that would enable prediction of meaning needed to perform statistical power analysis. The *a priori* statement of relationship between variables cannot be tested as these have yet to be identified. As Flick (1998) points out, "subjects with their views on a certain phenomenon construe a part of their reality; in conversations and discourses, phenomena are interactively produced and thus reality is constructed; latent structures of sense and related rules contribute to the construction of social situations with activities they generate. However, if there is a structure to the phenomenon, it will transcend particular interpretations". Given the diversity in goal definition and the lack of evidence in portraying the actual intent of first-line managers, the methodology permits the researcher to ascertain the perspective of individuals in their capacity at that level of management.

The starting assumptions by the researcher are also important. Authors, such as Miles & Huberman (1994), suggest that methodological procedures for the analysis of the data very much depend upon the analytical judgment of the researcher. Osborne (1990)

further expounds that the starting premise of the researcher ought to be clearly identified from the start. This is because the "phenomenological researcher attempts to articulate predispositions and biases; in this way those who read the reports of the research will be able to take the researcher's perspective into account". At the start of this research and in the light of this comment, the following assumptions were made.

Hinged on the evidence suggested by Locke & Latham (1990) on goal setting, the fundamental assumption is that Japanese first-line managers would distinctly identify goals which would be displayed, specific, quantified and with clear deadlines. This premise is based upon the general acknowledgement of corporate practices as well as on the outcome of visits carried out to more than thirty corporate entities in Japan. From the larger sample of Canadian organisational visits, it was expected that Canadian first-line managers would not demonstrate such a goal orientation. Thus, it was felt that the survey of first-line managers would provide the related evidence.

8.2 THEORETICAL LITERATURE AKIN TO THE TABULATION PROCESS

A number of procedures have been proposed to analyse open-ended questions; each seems to develop its own terminology. With the aim to obtain an overview of the thematic range of the text to be analysed, a transformation of responses into descriptive terms is deemed necessary.

According to Flick (1998), "the research is the social distribution of perspectives on a phenomenon or a process. The underlying assumption is that, in different social worlds or groups, different views can be found". He suggests the following:

1) When reading the text, key words are noted alongside the text.

2) The next step is to refine this structure by marking central concepts.

3) This is followed by the production of a table of content for the text.

In a similar vein, Creswell (1998) views phenomenological data analysis as proceeding through the methodology of reduction, the analysis of specific statements and themes, as well as the search for all possible meanings. His process is fourfold:

1) The researcher first reads all descriptions in their entirety.

2) The author then extracts significant statements from each description.

3) These statements are formulated into meanings, and these meanings are clustered into themes.

4) The researcher integrates these themes into a narrative description.

The researcher forms initial categories of information about the phenomenon being studied by segmenting information, namely open coding, and then assembles the data into meaningful ways. These two basic steps can also be seen through the eyes of Van Kaams (1969) and Stewart (1988). The first two steps to classifying the research data, which evolve from the content into categories, are:

(a) the transformation of responses into descriptive topical terms; and

(b) the reduction of terms into broader categories or clusters.

8.2.1 Transformation of Responses into Descriptive Topical Terms

Summer (1991) states that "content analysis is a technique for systematically describing the form and content of written or spoken material. The technique is suitable for any kind of written or spoken material. Content refers to the specific topics or themes. The best way to select categories for classification is first to skim through the material to

identify the major themes". A similar pattern of organising data, generating categories, themes and patterns, is suggested by Marshall & Rossman (1995). They maintain that "each phase of data analysis entails data reduction as the reams of collected data are brought into management chunks and interpreted. The researcher brings meaning and insight to the words and acts of the participants in the study. The category generation phase of data analysis is the most difficult, complex, ambiguous, creative, and challenging. The process of category generation involves noting regularities in the setting chosen for study.... The categories should be internally consistent but distinct from one another". Thus, the process is one where both the responses and the researcher play an active role. However, it must not be underestimated that the process is complicated due to the free expression of the respondents which can yield a wide variety of responses.

As an example, the respondent may cover a number of topics replying to one question, and the many parts of the answer may fit under more than one category. In the Canadian survey, respondent #22 gives the following answer to Question #2: "I am the first non-technical (non-engineer) manager in this position. My boss expects sound management of the program: quality, efficiency and financial responsibility with emphasis on enabling people to become more responsible in their own work as a part of a team". This provides input in relation to the individual, his/her boss and his/her subordinates. The answer covers topics related to the preparation of the individual, results expected as well as methods to accomplish goals. Some qualitative reference is categorised under 'sound management'. In such cases where multi-faceted responses are expressed, each facet is recorded under appropriate categories.

8.2.2 Reduction of Terms into Clusters

Data reduction refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting and transforming the data that appear in the surveys; this process occurs continuously. The coding of data leads to new ideas on what should go into data display. Miles & Huberman (1994) suggest that qualitative data analysis is a continuous, iterative enterprise. A given code or category signals a theme that accounts for much data, makes these intelligible. It is hard to explain 'something' satisfactorily until the gist is understood. Therefore it is suggested to begin with a text, trying out various coding categories, identifying themes and trends, delineating the 'deep structure' and then integrating the data into an explanatory framework. Such a progression can be viewed as a 'ladder of analytical abstraction' (Carney, 1990; Miles & Huberman, 1994), as presented in Figure 8.1. By starting with the raw responses, the first step is to summarise and package the data, such as the conceptual framework by Miles & Huberman (1994) and integrative diagrams by Strauss (1987). This aggregation provides the bases for developing an exploratory framework. The concept of themes is similar to that of maps proposed by Maxwell (1996) whereby a topology of individual concepts can be grouped under a broader umbrella for developing and clarifying theory, known as concept mapping. Like memos, concept maps are a way of 'thinking on paper' (Howard & Barton, 1986). Two main uses identified by Maxwell (1996) are:

(a) To pull together, and make visible, what the implicit theory is, or to clarify an existing theory.

(b) To develop a theory.

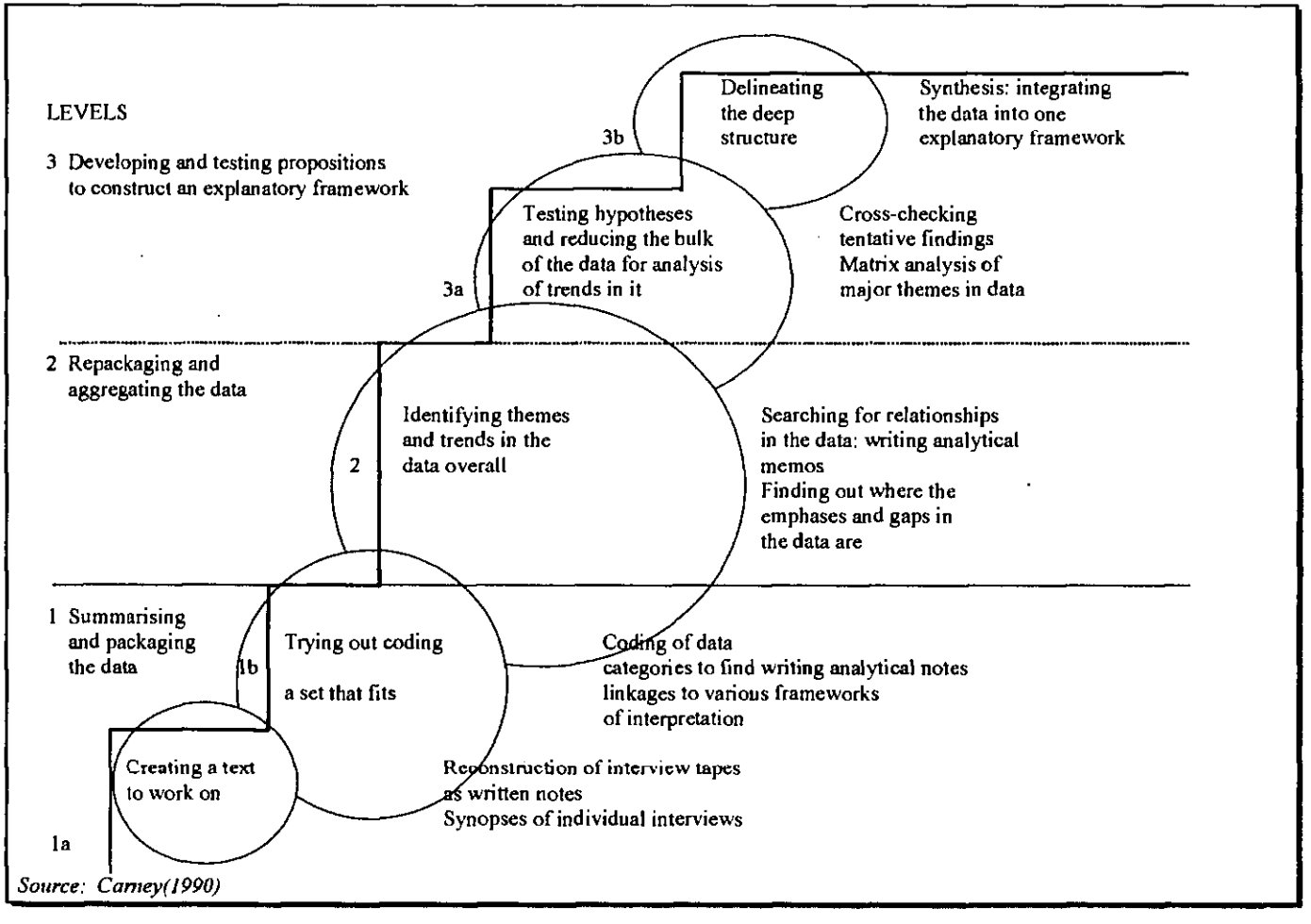


Figure 8.1 Ladder of Analytical Abstraction

The process of data reduction is pertinent to this research as the terminology varies from plant to plant, function to function, and individual to individual, each with unique perspectives on situations faced. Thus, the process identifies basic concerns, not only those beyond the specifics of each situation but also those common to other respondents. Miles & Huberman (1994) also propose a cognitive mapping process, first described by Khattri & Miles (1993) whereby different concerns are aggregated into broader concepts (Figure 8.2), showing how different codes can be grouped into categories. For example, elements which share the concern, that is 'things they want to stay away from', as illustrated at the bottom right corner in the Figure, are grouped together as a cluster; they refer to a style of decision-making. This analytical step is similar to that propounded by Carney (1990) who ends the whole process of synthesis by integrating the data into one explanatory framework. The interaction between cells is intimated by Khattri & Miles (1993). As an overview, these various sources agree on the following key areas:

1) Several steps are common in relation to

   a. standardisation of terms

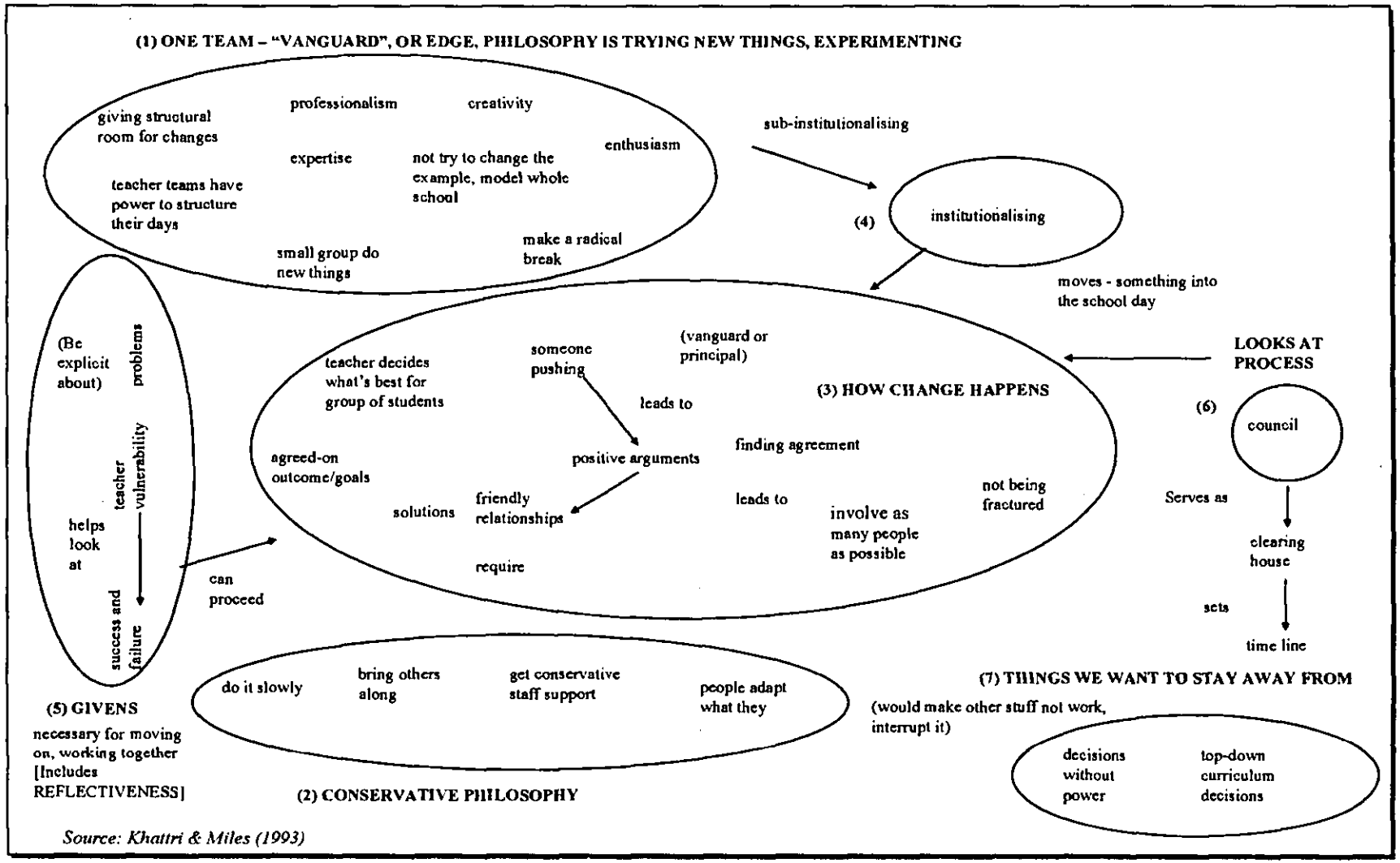
   b. development of categories

   c. consolidation into themes or clusters, using a mapping procedure

2) The selection of terms, categories or maps is very much dependent on the researcher. As Patton (1990) points out, there are two types of topology: the 'indigenous', created from the responses, and the 'analyst-constructed' or 'theory-constructed', reflecting existing theories.

3) Data reduction or classification is a progressive process, as patterns are identified.

4) The classification scheme should be clear and specific to ensure that the scoring of the categories is reliable, that is if two people carry out a content analysis of the same article, using a single list of categories, they should come up with similar results. As Sommer (1991) claims, the first step in reliability is to train two or more judges in the use of the scoring.



Source: Khattri & Miles (1993)

Figure 8.2 Cognitive Mapping Process

In order to establish the procedure to be used in this research, several professors were contacted to verify its validity. Professor Larry Cochran from the University of British Columbia, whose expertise is in the area of analytical procedures in psychology, states that as long as the procedure followed is clearly documented, there is no problem. Because of the multitude of possible responses, a reasonable set of categories should be developed, bearing in mind the following:

(a) the area which needs the greatest care is the development of definitions for each of these categories in order to maintain consistency in classification.

(b) the coding of any response should be the same, irrespective of who carries out the tabulation.

(c) the risk area is the introduction of personal biases in the classification process.

(d) each category should not be so abstract as to be non-descriptive.

(e) overlap or duplication in categories should be avoided.

Moreover, in conversations with Dr. Prem Fry formerly from the University of Calgary, whose area of expertise is in counselling psychology, she points out that her research takes a holistic approach which follows very similar steps in order to reflect the richness of the data.

In the application of such procedures, unique challenges emerged:

(a) Comparability (or lack of) of management concepts between Canada and Japan.

(b) The finding of mutually-exclusive categories, as suggested by Professor Larry Cochran

(c) Difference in terminology due to the large number of perspectives

(d) Different foci held by individuals.

As each question deals with different topics, such as goals, training and recognition, it required its own coding scheme. Given such considerations, the actual steps used in the processing of the responses are examined in section 8.3.

8.3 ACTUAL TABULATION PROCEDURE

With the exception of the translation process from Japanese to English, a seven-step analysis process was applied to both the Canadian and Japanese samples (Figure 8.3). These were:

1) Topical listing of responses
2) Development of categories
3) Comparison and expansion of categories
4) Re-coding of responses
5) Tabulation of responses
6) Mapping categories into clusters
7) Mapping the Canadian and Japanese data

The data for each group of subjects was treated independently and without cross-reference to the topics and categories of the other with the two exceptions being Steps 3 and 6. In order to be all inclusive and consistent between the two surveys, codes were developed for each country. After the reviewing of all the returned questionnaires, the categories developed from each tabulation were then compared in order to establish one comprehensive list, common to both populations. The integration of the two lists was required to allow for meaningful comparison; the translation and coding of responses were carried out independently from each another in order to avoid any 'contamination' or 'halo effect' such as reading into the answers the categories which were being developed. Each of the seven steps is elucidated upon.

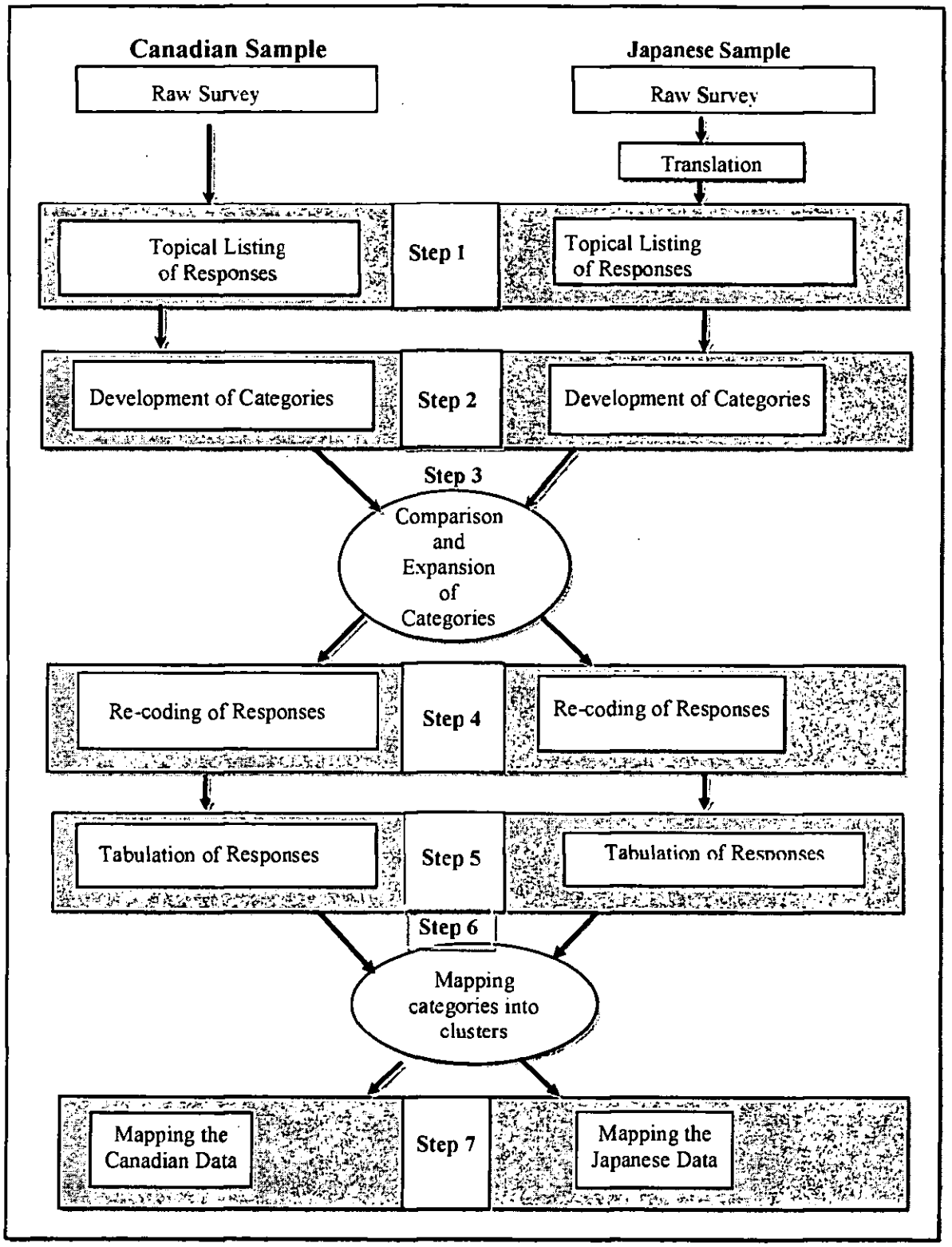


Figure 8.3 The Seven-Step Analysis Flow

Step 1. Topical Listing of Responses

As completed Canadian survey forms were received, each was assigned a sequential number, later used as means of identification in the tabulation of the data. Whilst software exists for the tabulation of key words, their use requires some consistency in terminology. In this regard, since there were so many variances, the decision was not to use such software. An index of topical categories, which refers to the grouping of responses similar in nature and to which the same tabulation code could be assigned, was developed by following an iterative process. Using Patton's (1990) terminology, the indigenous method of developing categories, which least colours the processing of the responses, was selected. The topical focus of each reply for each question was identified; if it had not been previously encountered, it was added to the 'topical focus' master list for each population. The questionnaire number was systematically logged in the appropriate category of the master list; the same procedure was applied when there was more than one topic raised in one response. All returned forms were processed and analysed, question by question, to allow continuity of thought.

Step 2. Development of Categories

Given the randomness and the number of topical foci listed, further aggregation was required; groupings by area of focus were developed for each population. For example, all responses which related to respondents' workload were grouped together under one category. Each of these is described under the analysis of the data for each question. This procedure is similar to Finnigan's (1994) classification system. Great effort was expended to avoid force fitting data into pre-set categories. For this reason, the procedure was effected for each country independently of the other.

Step 3. Comparison and Expansion of Categories

For both the Canadian and Japanese surveys, once all the topical foci were consolidated into their respective categories, it became obvious that there were areas which shared the same motif. Broad categories with similar focus, emanated from those developed in Step 2. One list, which incorporated all of the categories found in both populations, was then prepared to ensure consistency in categories. It is at this stage that major differences emerged between the Canadian and Japanese data, such as the sense of obligation to develop subordinates in Japan compared to Canada. This process permitted the display of the uniqueness of each population. It was important for this supplemental step to be introduced so as to integrate the two populations without losing their individuality.

Step 4. Re-coding of Responses

Miles & Huberman (1994) acknowledge that "Understanding comes in layers; the longer we are in the environment, the more layers appear to surface, and the choice of when to close down, when to go with a definitive coding scheme or definite analysis, can be painful". Given the set of categories developed in Step 3, questionnaires from both populations were revisited to reflect any changes which might be required in light of the harmonised list. Step 4 is similar to Step 2, except that groupings now reflect the findings of the uniqueness of both populations. This facilitated the comparative analysis of the two sets of data, preserving the uniqueness of the responses and reflecting the differences.

Step 5. Tabulation of Responses

Once the responses were re-coded into their standardised categories, the tabulation, in the form of frequency distribution, was then possible.

Step 6. Mapping Categories into Clusters

Given the two populations, an objective was, not only to identify differences in frequency for specific categories, but also to pinpoint broad areas of concern. Using the mapping technique illustrated by Khattri & Miles (1993); (see figure 8.2) the results of the tabulation lead to natural clusters sharing inherent concerns, such as the issue of development of subordinates. The natural flow of responses was the main criterion for the definition of these mapping areas.

Step 7. Mapping the Canadian and Japanese Data

Using the areas of concern, as defined in Steps 6 and 7, constituted the actual grouping of the data, according to these mapping areas.

8.4 AUDIT OF THE TABULATION

Because of the number of returned questionnaires involved and the variety of responses, a 100% audit of the interpretation of the responses was deemed impractical. One stumbling block was the difficulty in finding an individual willing to understand the coding system, to practise with the surveys and, subsequently, to proceed with the formal evaluation. Therefore, it was decided that a sample of about 10% would be employed to ascertain the accuracy of the ratings. The audit was performed on the responses of Questions #2, and #8. The reason for limiting the audit to these two questions was that they represent the cornerstone of this research because of their focus on the nature of goals. Each of these iterations took a total of nine hours for the Canadian data. The same procedure was followed for the Japanese data after assuring the accuracy of the translations. A total of thirty hours was required. The coding from the Japanese point of view was also reviewed, in a similar way to that of the Canadian data (Appendix E).

As an example with the Canadian data, employing random numbers generated from an Internet source, a total of 44 questionnaires were picked. For each question a list of codes with their respective definitions was provided to the interrater. After review of the terminology and a practice run on a number of surveys, the samples were classified. At the conclusion of this task, the researcher conveyed the answers to the interrater who verified the accuracy of the audit. For Question #2, the results were as follows: of the 55 codes, one was in error by the interrater, one was a misreading of the handwriting and one had been missed by the interrater; 3 errors out of 55 represents a 95% accuracy. After verification of the results, the discrepancies were reduced to zero. The same procedure was followed for Question #8. Only these two questions were verified as a matter of practicality.

The same procedure was followed for the classification by management function. A new list of random numbers was generated. Out of a total of 61 responses, one error was found in the original coding and one omission on the part of the interrater; 1 over 61 represents a 0.016 error rate. A total of 88 surveys were verified, using two different samples. One true error was found in a total of 116 potential codings; an error rate of less than 1%.

Moreover, the KAPPA factor (Conger, 1980) was calculated to ascertain the interrater reliability. The KAPPA factor is a statistical measure of agreement, used under conditions that involve comparison with a standard set of responses. Complete agreement between two patterns is defined by a KAPPA value of 1.00, and those with values greater than .75 represent excellent agreement beyond the chance level (Guardagnoli & Velicer, 1988). For this survey, KAPPA achieved over 94, indicating

that, firstly, the definition of each category was specific so that a second person could consistently categorise the responses and that, secondly, the raters were themselves consistent in their application of the definition.

8.5 IN SUMMARY

Only the questionnaires where the respondents clearly identified by either their titles or their responsibilities, that they performed in the capacity of first-line managers were used for the purpose of this analysis. Open-ended questions are difficult to tabulate. In this study, the actual responses are the starting point in developing the topical categories for each of the two populations, one independent of the other. The lists of categories were merged in order not to lose the uniqueness of either population. To assure that concepts have not been ignored, both samples were re-coded and, as areas of common focus were identified, the data was 'mapped' into broader categories. Each question was analysed independent of others. Any similarities in categories between questions were strictly due to the nature of the responses to each question.

Because of the interpretative element involved in the analysis of the responses, interraters, for the Canadian and Japanese data, randomly reviewed selected responses in order to ascertain the accuracy of the researcher's tabulations. The results indicate that the definition for each category was sufficient for a third party to ascertain the validity of the coding and that there was consistency in the application of the definitions.

PART III

TABULATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

Part III examines the results of the tabulation for each of the questions and the overall conclusions that can be gleaned from these findings. Chapter 9 reviews the items related to the employees' work environment and position, with particular reference to the criteria used in qualifying the respondents as first-line managers. Chapters 10 through to13 consist of the analysis of the responses to the various questions; these are grouped according to the appropriate element of the Generic Performance Model, namely: goals and performance, self-efficacy/training needs, environmental characteristics and recognition/feedback, as set out below:

Chapters	Question	Generic Performance Model Component
10	# 2 and # 8	Goals and Performance
11	# 3	Self-Efficacy/Training Needs
12	# 4, # 6, # 7 and # 10	Environmental Characteristics
13	# 5 and # 9	Recognition/Feedback

Each of these chapters includes a glossary of terms describing each of the categories, tables showing totals and percentages and related graphs. Categories were developed for a given question based solely upon the responses to that question. Once the tabulation of both the individual questions and the clusters was completed, frequency distributions and graphs were produced. "Frequency distribution helps identify the regularities expressed and understand day-to-day situations" (Van Maanen, 1979). The analysis of each question is shown as a percentage of respondents. The p value, the observed significance test used to ascertain the statistical significance of the difference in response rate between the two populations, is included for reference purposes and is highlighted with an asterisk to indicate that the difference is statistically significant at the .05 level. For

comparison purposes, the Canadian data is presented first, followed by the Japanese. In order to provide greater insights, mapping into groups is proffered, with the mapping being developed after all answers had been tabulated so as not to influence the determination of the tabulation categories. For each of the populations, cross-correlation matrices were computed in order to determine if the responses to one question could be predictive of the responses to another question. The results of these procedures are indicated where the outcome was of significance. Each chapter concludes with a summary of the findings.

The primary objective of the analysis, as pointed out by Osborne (1990) and Miles & Huberman (1994), is to achieve perspectival understanding of a phenomenon and to identify its structure based upon emphatic understanding rather than statistical procedures. The true strength of this research lies in the phenomenological description of the first-line managers' responses on the nature of goals and types of factors which relate to each component of the Generic Performance Model.

CHAPTER 9

THE QUALIFYING SAMPLE

No man is the whole of himself; his friends are the rest of him
Harry Emerson Fosdick, 1972

9.0 PREAMBLE

The key in phenomelogical research is to ascertain the local groundedness (Miles & Huberman, 1994), the perceptions, assumptions, prejudgements, presuppositions (van Manen, 1977) and to connect these to the social world around them. The first four items namely, position, department, type of business, total number of employees in the company, provide information about the organisation. Question #1: "How long have you been in this position?" relates to the respondent's experience in the position. It seems, therefore, that position is crucial in assuring comparability of perspective on responsibilities and challenges.

9.1 DEFINING THE QUALIFYING SAMPLE

Using the 'classical' definition of levels of management, the 795 questionnaires collected were screened accordingly, as to whether the respondents were first-line, middle and top management or general employees. Only responses from first-line managers with supervisory responsibilities were used (see section 7.4.6). For example, a bank manager supervising the tellers' operations could be construed as a supervisor. A 'Regional Manager' supervising hourly and salaried workers could also be construed as first-line management but, under normal situations, the title would be considered as middle management. The title of Administrative Secretary is ambiguous; should the emphasis be placed on 'Secretary' or the qualifier 'Administrative'? A secretary would never be

construed as first-line manager. However, when the respondent indicates direct supervision of six departmental clerks, he/she would fall into the first-line management category. These examples illustrate the wide range of titles of positions which qualify in this study as 'first-line management'. Table 9.1 provides a Glossary of the definitions of managerial levels used in the screening of the responses.

General Employee - Any employee not retained in a supervisory capacity such as assembly worker, secretary, salesperson, engineer.
First-Line Manager - Any employee with supervisory responsibilities, irrespective of the title such as foreman, supervisor or manager directly overseeing the work of the "General Workers."
Middle Manager - Two steps or more removed from "General Workers," interfacing with first-line management.
Upper Level Manager - Policy making positions such as president, director, vice-presidents or their equivalents in the Japanese context.
Other - Any title which did not fit any of the above categories such as minister.

Table 9.1 Glossary of Definitions of Managerial Levels

Some titles include qualifiers such as assistant, acting, or deputy and were tabulated at the level below the rank title being qualified. The decision was made to handle all such titles uniformly in this fashion to recognise that the title indicating is a lower level of authority and actual responsibilities. Table 9.2 shows the 795 questionnaires collected (437 Canadian, 358 Japanese) prior to screening, according to the definitions. Each respondent's title was coded as falling into one of the categories.

	Canada		Japan	
	#	%	#	%
General Employee	40	9	19	5
First-Line Manager	314	72	278	77
Middle Manager	39	9	33	9
Upper Level Manager	30	7	14	4
Other	12	3	7	2
Blank	2	0	7	2
Total Respondents	437		358	

Table 9.2 Distribution of all Respondents by Managerial Level

Canadian Data

As can be seen, the Canadian questionnaires were screened, based upon the criteria described by section 7.4 using the responses pertaining to first-line managers. Of the 437 questionnaires collected, 314 (72%) were judged as meeting the position criterion.

Japanese Data

The translation of titles from Japanese to Western equivalents was further complicated by the differences between Japanese and Western managerial responsibilities as well as by the multitude of Japanese titles. Therefore, the Japanese titles were used to ascertain if the respondent's position fitted the first-line management criterion. Further discussion on titles can be found in the Japanese management practices [Appendix A]. As can be seen, a total of 358 questionnaires were collected but not all respondents met the qualifying criterion. Based upon the title indicated by the respondents, each survey was categorised as general employee, first-line manager, middle manager and senior manager and 278 responses (77%) were judged to fit the first-line management criterion.

As an overview graphically, Figure 9.1 shows the percentage distribution of all respondents by managerial level. As can be seen, the vast majority of the respondents were first-line managers.

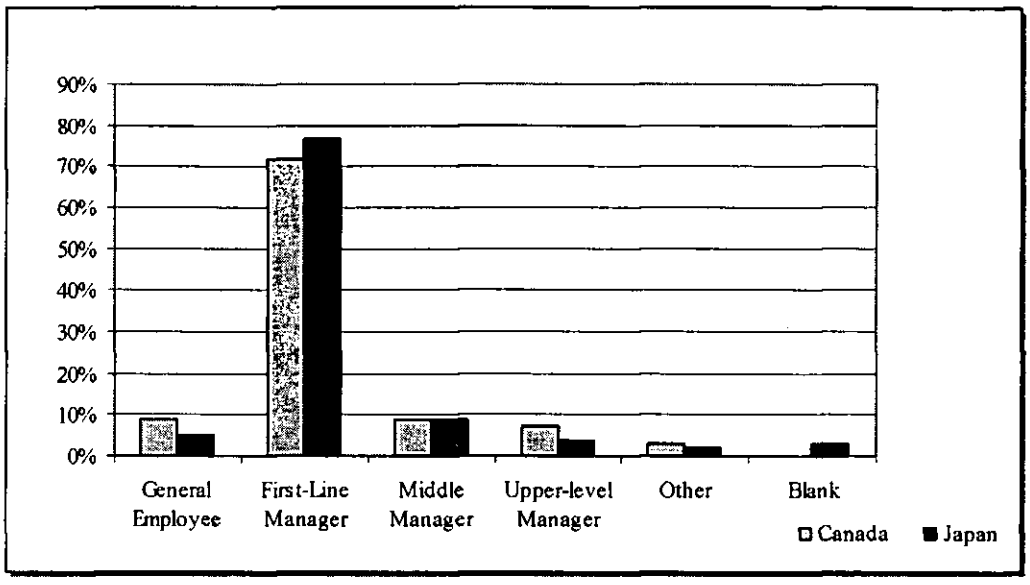


Figure 9.1 Percentages Distribution of all Respondents by Managerial Level

By phenomenological standards, the total number of useable responses far exceeds the typical numbers suggested in the literature. The size of the samples should assure that various perspectives are truly represented in the process of ascertaining the nature of goals.

9.2 DEPARTMENTAL FUNCTIONS WITHIN THE ORGANISATION

For the analysis, the choice was made to make the distinction between line and staff personnel where line are clearly charged to produce an output and staff are responsible to administer systems and procedures as well as provide specialized expertise and services (Schermerhorn *et al*, 2000) (Table 9.3). Friedman (2000) makes the distinction between staff, as having overall planning and direction responsibilities and line as having direct job performance responsibilities. Shafritz (1980) defines line as having the most direct responsibilities for achieving goals. This distinction was selected as the criteria for tabulation purposes.

	Canada		Japan	
	#	%	#	%
Line	235	75	152	55
Staff	78	25	117	43
Blank	1	0	9	3

Table 9.3 Distribution of Respondents by Type of Position

9.3 TYPE OF BUSINESS

A number of possibilities are available to codify the types of organizations. It was decided to codify the responses on the basis of the products or services being rendered. As the primary aim was to investigate the nature of goals, the choice was to use broader definitions, namely manufacturing, retail and services. The rationale related to the fact that the type of goals might be influenced by the type of activity rather than by the end product/or service (Table 9.4).

	Canada		Japan	
	#	%	#	%
Manufacturing	177	56	207	74
Retail	63	20	14	5
Services	74	24	49	18
Blank			8	3

Table 9.4 Distribution of Respondents by Type of Business

9.4 SIZE OF THE ORGANISATION

Three size ranges were selected to analyse the data. The size of categories was chosen for the changing organisational dynamics within an organisation. At one end of the spectrum would be the smaller organizations whereby the influence of the owner/general manager could readily be felt throughout the organization, thus the size of 300

employees or less. At the other end would be organisations which, because of their size, require policies and procedures to maintain consistency and uniformity, and such institutions would also possess a number of plants or locations; the size selected related to over 1,000 employees. Table 9.5 contains the actual data comparing the Canadian with the Japanese.

	Canada		Japan	
	#	%	#	%
0 - 300 employees	124	39	41	14
301 - 1000 employees	61	19	18	6
1001 - over employees	129	41	210	75
Blank			9	3

Table 9.5 Distribution of Respondents by Organisation Size

9.5 EXPERIENCE IN THE CURRENT POSITION

The purpose in assessing the length of time in the position is to ascertain if and how experience affects the perspective of the individual. The choice in the time spans are those generally accepted in industry: the honeymoon period (1-12 months) is the sense-making period during which individuals adapt to new tasks and the environment (Weick, 1995; Jablin & Kramer, 1998), the experience building period (1-3 years) and the time whereby a person is considered experienced (over 3 years). Table 9.6 indicates that the mix in experience does not exhibit any major differences between the two samples.

	Canada		Japan	
	#	%	#	%
0 - 12 months	80	25	55	20
1 - 3 years	90	29	63	23
Over 3 years	144	46	160	58

Table 9.6 Distribution of Respondents by Time in the Position

NEW TITLE

9.6 RELEVANCY OF BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In procedures related to phenomenological analysis, the fundamental purpose of the research is to determine the range of perceptions of individuals (Polkinghorne, 1989; Osborne, 1990; Angen, 2000; Maheswaran & Shavitt, 2000) as compared to the statistical analysis of cause and effect. Thus, these various statistics describing the respondents' positions and work environments are offered as general information about the sampled populations. Furthermore, these statistics, as was pointed out in earlier chapters, do not adequately reflect the range of data which would be required if such statistical analysis to be undertaken.

The complexity of such analysis is further illustrated by other studies, such as those of Terpstra & Rozell (1994) who found that differences in industry type or organisational size did not have any significant impact on the use of goals and profitability. In the Japanese context (Appendix A), the homogeneity in management practices across industries and size of organisation is also generally accepted (Lorriman & Kenjo, 1995). Furthermore, the lack of information on goals and how managers do what they do (Hales, 2001) are related as the actual focus of their activities would provide new insights in both of these areas in terms of the emphasis placed upon the ends or the means. For these reasons, this research limits itself to the descriptive nature of the responses.

One consideration is how representative is the data collected from the two populations. Given the wide range of industries, geography, size of organisations and variety of titles, the samples provide a good cross-section of perspectives of the two populations. As

such, the criteria of a sample size sufficient to be inclusive of various outlook is being met.

CHAPTER 10

GOALS AND PERFORMANCE

It is better to ask some of the questions than to know all of the answers.
James Thurber

Better ask twice than lose your way once.
Danish proverb

10.0 PREAMBLE

The survey instrument comprises two primary questions which focus on the respondents' views of goals/expectations:

Question #2 "What were your Boss's expectations when you took this position?"

Question #8 "What do you expect to accomplish this year?"

The tabulation for each of these questions was carried out; subsequently, the two tabulations were compared, thus providing overall observations.

10.1 QUESTION #2 "WHAT WERE YOUR BOSS'S EXPECTATIONS WHEN YOU TOOK THIS POSITION?"

The answers to this question provide a first-hand insight to the respondents' perceptions of what their boss actually expected to be accomplished. Defined by the *Oxford Dictionary* (1991) as "the end toward which effort is directed" or "the object of one's efforts", the term goal merges these two perspectives. The answers provided actually elucidate on the prevalent perception and the content of goals. This information allows both practioners and researchers to examine if any gap exists between theory and practice. If there are differences between the Canadian and Japanese first-line managers' responses, the obvious challenge is to ascertain the probable causes which might contribute to such differences.

Miles & Huberman (1994) point out that, in tabulating responses, codes emerge progressively. In analysing Question #2, two types of information were encountered. The first relates to the organisational unit towards which the efforts are directed, such as individual's, subordinates' or superiors', referred to as responses codified by organisational focus. The second categorises the responses on the basis of the management functions to be performed.

10.1.1 Tabulation of Responses Codified by Organisational Focus

The first coding iteration was to categorise the responses based upon their organisational focus. The respondents' answers could address several constituencies, such as their own performance and needs or those of the department. In other words, how does the individual see the scope of his/her efforts? A total of ten categories evolved from the responses and are defined in a glossary (Table 10.1).

What Were Your Boss's Expectations When You Took This Position?

Personal: Relating to the person's career or personal goals such as promotion.
Task/Outcome: Relating to projects to be accomplished or specific measures of performance such as quality improvement, sales increase or cost reduction.
Position: Including administering the department's activities, such as developing procedures and carrying out day-to-day duties.
Boss Interface: Activities such as filling in and supporting the boss.
Intradepartmental: Referring to issues within the person's jurisdiction such as training and motivating subordinates.
Interdepartmental: Dealing with interaction with other departments.
Corporate: Reflecting concerns such as corporate profitability and market share.
External: Relating to customers and other external entities to the business.
Don't Know: Respondent not aware of any expectations.
Other: Category dealing with responses which do not fit any of the above.

Table 10.1 Question #2: Glossary of Defined Categories, Codified by Organisational Focus

When looking further at the various responses, one or more of the following elements in the responses provided are identified:

1. The person with his/her own goals and ambitions, which may or may not be related to the department's or the organisation's needs
2. The focus on the procedural aspects of the position and role
3. The end may be accomplished either in the form of a project, volume, or level of performance to be reached
4. The department, which is the composite of people, equipment and resources
5. The boss and the implied demands and interactions
6. The interdepartmental interactions required as part of an organisation
7. Corporate concerns such as profit, market share, image which are beyond the department's own contributions
8. External entities such as customers, government and shareholders; most responses in this category represent a concern for customers, the key reason to exist.

The initial order of the categories was determined as they appeared during the tabulation of the responses. Two other catch-all categories were also included: 'blank' category which some respondents did not complete and 'other' category where the responses ill-fitted the above categories.

It is important to acknowledge that an individual answer could contain more than one response. Two methods were used for calculating the percentage ratios, as follows:

10.1.1.1 Method I

This method is based upon the number of responses for a given category divided by the total number of qualified returned questionnaires from first-line managers, namely 314 for the Canadian and 278 for the Japanese. The results are shown, with the p value calculated as a tabulation (Table 10.2) and as a graph (Figure 10.1). As can be seen in Table 10.2 when comparing the frequency distribution of the two populations, four out of

the ten categories have significant differences (<.05 indicated by *). Position, corporate and external focus are significantly greater for the Canadians, whilst Intradepartmental focus is significantly greater for the Japanese.

What Were Your Boss's Expectations When You Took This Position?

	Canada		Japan		p
	#	%	#	%	
Personal	91	29	75	27	.327
Task/Outcome	74	24	68	24	.437
Position	142	45	84	30	.000*
Boss Interface	23	7	23	8	.390
Intradepartmental	77	25	100	36	.002*
Interdepartmental	9	3	11	4	.306
Corporate	34	11	15	5	.012*
External	35	11	8	3	.000*
Don't Know	20	6	21	8	.342
Other	5	2	2	1	.278

*p < .05

Table 10.2 Question #2: Tabulation of Responses, Codified by Organisational Focus

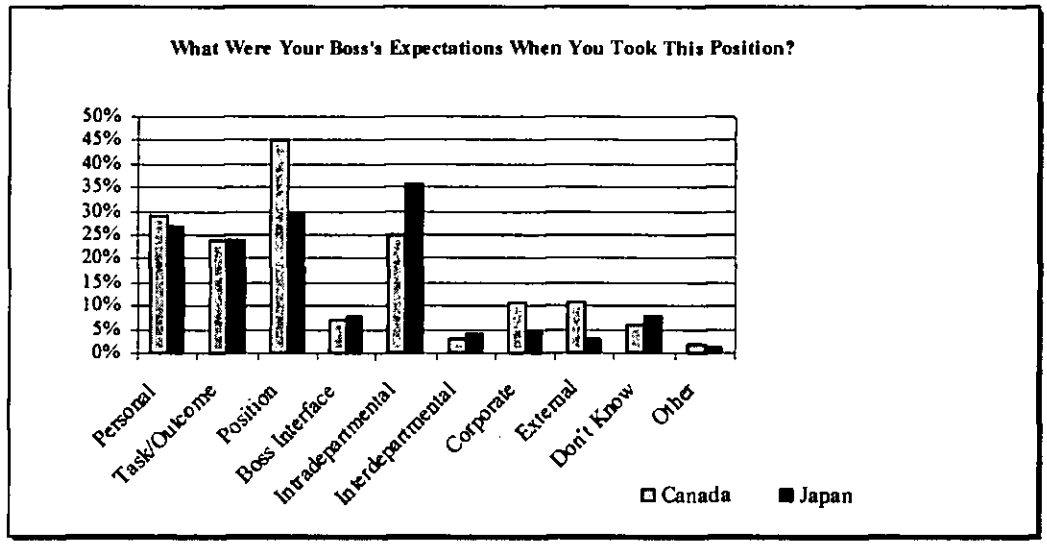


Figure 10.1 Question # 2: Graph of Responses, Codified by Organisational Focus

The same data provides an easier means of comparison, when organised in a descending order as a tabulation (Table 10.3) and as a graph (Figure 10.2). Using the Canadian response rate to organise the data in descending order, this procedure allows very quickly to determine the relative importance of each factor.

What Were Your Boss's Expectations When You Took This Position?

	Canada	Japan	p
	%	%	
Position	45	30	.000*
Personal	29	27	.327
Intradepartmental	24	36	.002*
Task / Outcome	24	24	.437
Corporate	11	5	.012*
External	11	3	.000*
Boss Interface	7	8	.390
Don't Know	6	8	.390
Interdepartmental	3	4	.306
Other	8	8	.387

*p < .05

Table 10.3 Question #2: Tabulation of Responses, Codified by Organisational Focus in Descending Order

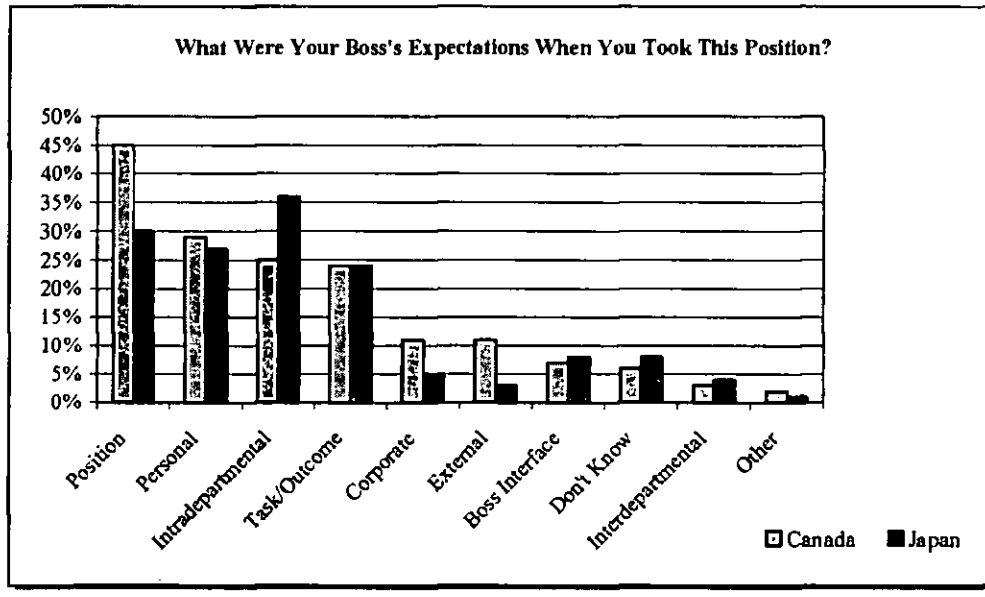


Figure 10.2 Question #2: Graph of Responses, Codified by Organisational Focus in Descending Order

Whether from tables or graphs, the following can be observed:

1. The major significant differences between the two populations are: (1) the focus on position by Canada 45% against Japan 30% and (2) the importance of the inner-workings of the department by Japan 36% against Canada 24%.

2. The majority of the responses concentrate on the direct area of concern of the first-line manager. Position, task/outcome, personal and intradepartmental all have a substantial response rate over others. It seems that, the further removed the organisational focus is from the immediate responsibilities, the lower the percentage response.

3. The Canadians clearly show a preponderance in their answers for Position with 45%, against an average of 30% for the other top three categories. The Japanese, on the other hand, show a fairly even distribution for the top four with a marked emphasis on their intradepartmental concern.

4. All other categories, including those of lower frequency, are comparable for the two populations.

10.1.1.2 Method II

In any given question, a respondent may proffer an answer that covers several topics. Each topic is logged as a separate mention entry for that individual, for that specified question. As such, after all the forms have been tabulated for that specific question, the number of mentions exceeds the number of respondents, namely 314 for the Canadians and 278 for the Japanese. When the frequency distribution is calculated, the denominator can be one of two choices. If the frequency distribution based upon the number of respondents is desired, the total number of qualified questionnaires is used. If the frequency distribution desired is calculated on the basis of the various responses, the total number responses is used. In each of the following chapters, the table first presented is that of the frequency distribution based upon the number of respondents. For Question #2, the frequency distribution based upon the total number of responses is calculated in Table 10.4 and shown as a graph (Figure 10.3). A total of 510 and 407 mentions were recorded from the Canadian and Japanese data, as compared to 314 and 278

questionnaires, respectively. This indicates that Canadian respondents provided 1.62 mentions for that question as compared to 1.46 for the Japanese. In all instances the distinction did not affect the overall findings and proved to make little difference in the percentages.

What Were Your Boss's Expectations When You Took This Position?

	Canada	Japan
	%	%
Position	28	21
Task / Outcome	21	20
Personal	18	18
Intradepartmental	15	25
External	7	2
Corporate	7	4
Boss Interface	4	6
Interdepartmental	2	3
Other	5	6
Don't Know	6	8

Table 10.4 Question #2: Tabulation Based on Total Number of Mentions, by Organisational Focus

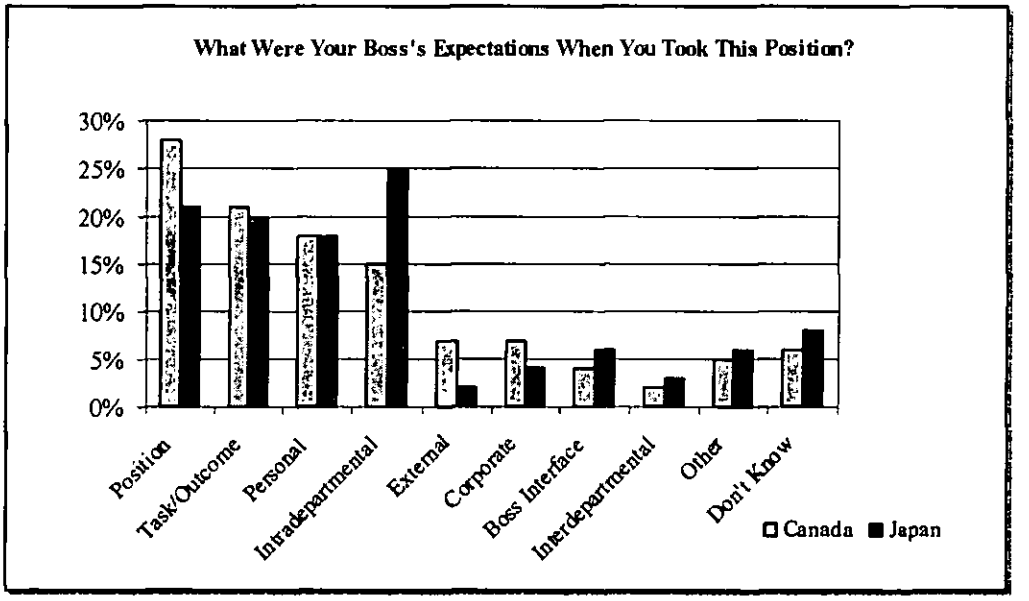


Figure 10.3 Question #2: Graph Based on Total Number of Mentions, by Organisational Focus

The calculation of percentage responses, using the total number of mentions, shows identical results to those based upon the number of questionnaires returned. This indicates that multiple responses to the question do not change the overall conclusion. The topics with higher percentage of mentions are in the areas directly related to the respondents' immediate sphere of influence. The Canadian population shows a greater propensity to focus on Position while their Japanese counterparts focus on Intradepartmental issues, that is their subordinates and the human inner workings of the group. All other categories, including those of lower frequency, are comparable for both populations, with the exception of corporate and external concerns.

Miles & Huberman (1994) point out that different accounting schemes are possible. The responses to Question #2 not only address the organisational aspects of goals, but also provide insights on the types of activity and outcomes pursued by first-line managers. It was decided to use the same data with a change in the criteria from an organisational focus to a management function.

10.1.2 Tabulation of Responses Codified Management Activities

Goals are not necessarily singular in nature and can be multi-faceted. In order to fully draw from the fertile ground, the data was codified on the basis of management activities (Table 10.5). Sixteen categories were generated, as encountered in the questionnaires. Once the categories were established, the answers were analysed with the result provided in Table 10.6, showing the total as well as the percentage of questionnaires for each of the categories. Figure 10.4 is the related graphic representation.

What Were Your Boss's Expectations When You Took This Position?

Plan: Indication of role in planning the group's activities.
Administer: Maintenance and 'caretaking' of an existing operation or department.
Produce Results: Need to meet expected results
Lead: Sense of direction indicated often using the term.
Improve/Change: Need for change from past practices or performance level.
Develop Subordinates: Role of instilling skills and training of subordinates.
Activate People/Department: Motivating subordinates to energise the organisation or individuals in one's charge.
Communicate: Activities of conveying messages between different constituencies, usually undefined.
Relate to Superior: Interaction, as individuals, taking place between the respondent and the direct superior.
Interface with others: Need for interaction with others such as peers and customers, excluding subordinates and superiors.
Own performance: Focus on one's own performance as compared to that of the whole department.
Project specialist: Actual accomplishment of a certain task as an individual 'expert' in a specific area with a clear start and finish.
Personal skills: Need and acquisition of new skills on the part of the respondent.
Overall contribution: Overall performance of units beyond the responsibility of the individual, such as company or division.
Other: Category is a catch-all for answers which do not fit the above.
Nothing/Blank: Response which indicates that no specific expectations were given when assigned to the position or not completed.

Table 10.5 Question #2: Glossary of Defined Categories, Codified by Management Activities

What Were Your Boss's Expectations When You Took This Position?

	Canada		Japan		p
	#	%	#	%	
Plan	7	2	16	6	.022*
Administer	119	38	39	14	.000*
Produce Results	89	28	25	9	.000*
Lead	8	2	57	20	.000*
Improve/Change	34	11	44	16	.047*
Develop Subordinates	22	7	47	17	.000*
Activate People/Department	32	10	37	13	.146
Communicate	15	5	11	4	.389
Relate to Superior	17	6	19	7	.291
Interface with Others	9	2	13	5	.173
Own performance	51	16	32	11	.062
Project specialist	19	6	13	5	.290
Personal skills	16	5	23	8	.082
Overall contribution	41	13	34	12	.430
Other	6	2	12	4	.072
Nothing/Blank	20	6	20	7	.346

*p < .05

Table 10.6 Question #2: Tabulation of Responses, Codified by Management Activities

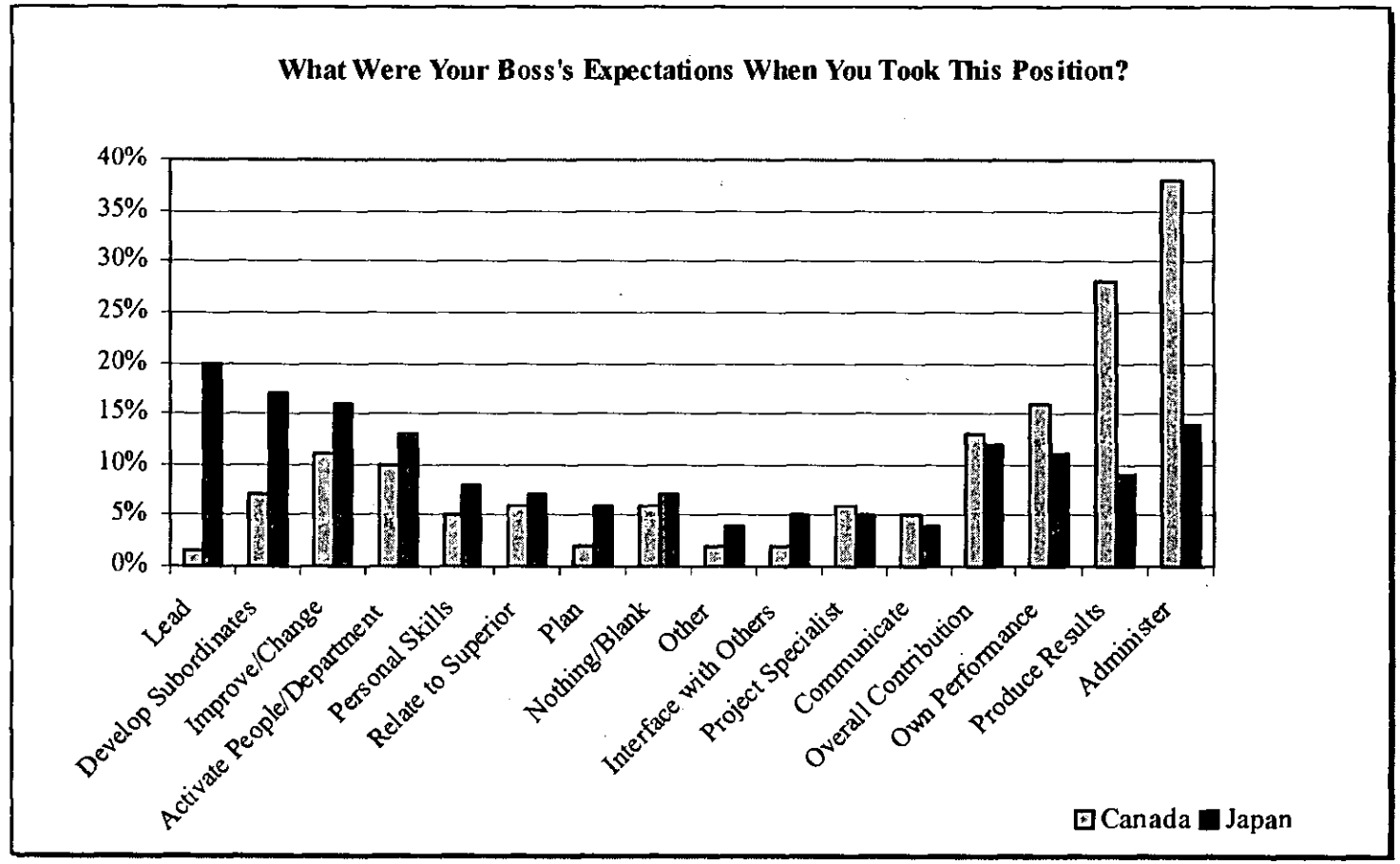


Figure 10.4 **Question #2: Graph of Responses, Codified by Management Activities**

In order to graphically display the data from Table 10.6 into a form which could be interpreted more easily, the order of the categories was changed. The dominant Canadian percentage responses are shown on the right side of the graph and the Japanese on the left, both in descending order (Figure 10.5).

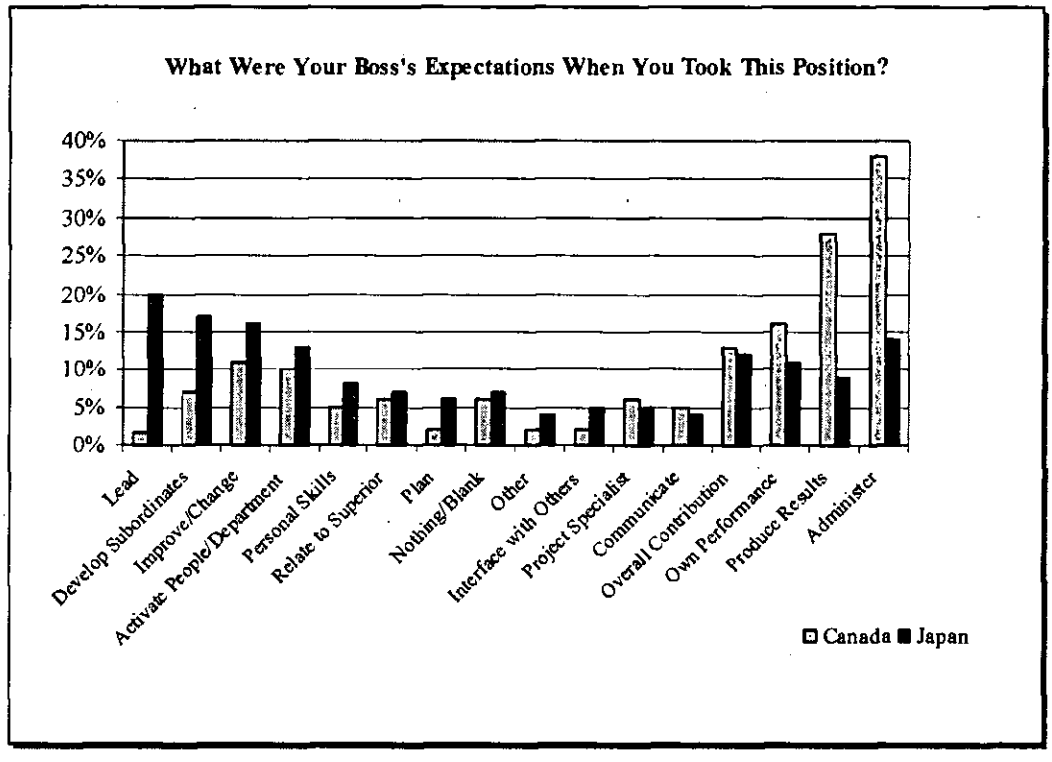


Figure 10.5 <u>**Question #2: Graph of Responses, Codified by Management Function in Descending Order of Dominance**</u>

As can be seen, there is a clear dominance of Canadian supervisors in the area of administering and producing results, which would indicate that they are more concerned with the administrative and end results areas of the position. The concerns of the Japanese supervisors to lead and to develop subordinates are significantly higher than their Canadian counterparts.

10.1.2.1 Mapping of Responses by Management Activities

In mapping the responses from Figure 10.5, a 'natural' grouping of the initial categories around themes can be readily observed. Three clusters emerge as an outgrowth of the original list of categories (Figure 10.6). The other categories not part of any cluster do not have readily discernable commonalities.

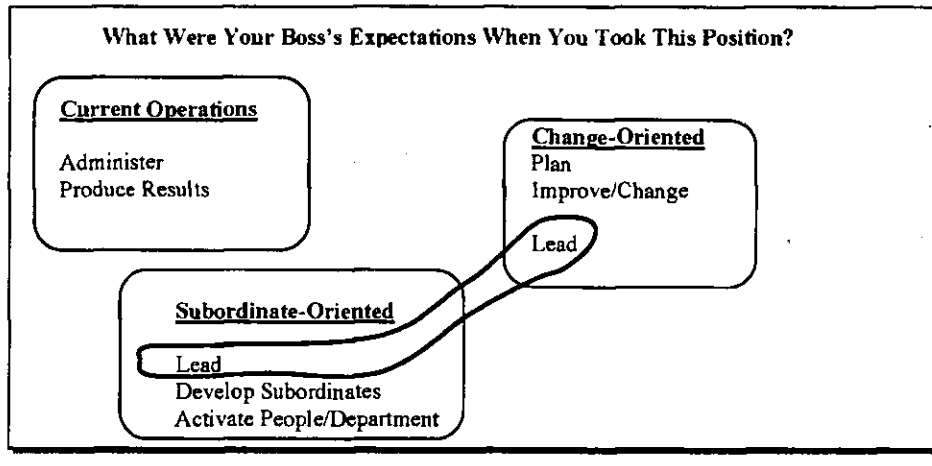


Figure 10.6 Question #2: Mapping of Responses by Management Activities

A cluster of responses seems to be short-term and reactive, focusing mainly on the current operations, composed of 'administer' and 'produce results' categories. A second cluster is taking a planned approach, longer term, which could be considered change-oriented and includes 'plan', 'improve/change' and 'lead'. A third cluster is very much focused on the human resources of the department or subordinate-oriented activities and includes 'lead', 'develop subordinates' and 'activate people/department', a phrase frequently encountered in the Japanese responses. The category, 'lead', was considered to fit the change-oriented as well the subordinate-oriented group and was thus included in both. As one cluster is not compared with another cluster, the inclusion of 'lead' in both does not influence the conclusions.

These three clusters further dramatise the differences between Canadian and Japanese managers. Table 10.7 clearly shows the propensity of Canadian first-line managers to concentrate on current operations with 66% versus 23% for the Japanese, while the Japanese focus on improving through being change-oriented with 42% versus 15% for the Canadians, and subordinate-oriented development with 51% versus 20% for the Canadians. The totals are based upon the sum of all the responses that are part of that cluster or multiple responses.

What Were Your Boss's Expectations When You Took This Position?

	Canada		Japan		p
	#	%	#	%	
Current Operations					
Administer	119	38	39	14	.000*
Produce Results	89	28	25	9	.000*
Total	208	66	64	23	.000*
Change-Oriented					
Plan	7	2	16	6	.022*
Improve/Change	34	11	44	16	.047*
Lead	8	2	57	20	.000*
Total	49	15	117	42	.000*
Subordinate-Oriented					
Lead	8	2	57	20	.000*
Develop Subordinates	22	7	47	17	.000*
Activate People/Department	32	10	37	13	.146
Total	62	20	141	51	.000*

*p < .05

Table 10.7 Question #2: Frequency Distribution by Management Activities by Dominant Areas – Multiple Responses

The results of this tabulation further reinforce earlier findings. Not only did they confirm those by organisational focus, but they also clarified the differences between the two populations, especially those in relation to what individuals perceive to be the reason for their contribution. However, it can be argued that individuals' responses may involve more than one category in a given cluster, but should only be counted once. For

example, the total for Current Operations is 208 for the Canadian responses and 64 for the Japanese. After eliminating the double counting possible answering both Administer and Produce Results, the actual count would be 185 and 61 respectively (Table 10.8).

What Were Your Boss's Expectations When You Took This Position?

	Canada		Japan		p
	#	%	#	%	
Current Operations					
Administer Produce Results	185	59	61	22	.000*
Change-Oriented					
Plan Improve/Change Lead	47	11	108	39	.000*
Subordinate-Oriented					
Lead Develop Subordinates Activate People/Department	58	19	120	43	.000*

*p < .05

Table 10.8 Question #2: Frequency Distribution by Management Activities by Dominant Areas – Single Responses

An individual answering the question may provide a reply covering a number of categories. When these categories are aggregated into a cluster, one cluster may have multiple responses from one individual (multiple count). These multiple responses for one cluster can also be counted as one single response as being from the same individual (single count). A comparison was carried out in relation to the mapping of the frequency distribution by management activities by dominant areas for multiple and single responses (Table 10.9).

What Were Your Boss's Expectations When You Took This Position?	Canada				Japan			
	#	#	%	%	#	#	%	%
	Mult.	Sing.	Mult.	Sing.	Mult.	Sing.	Mult.	Sing.
Current Operations	208	185	66	59	64	61	23	22
Change-Oriented	49	47	15	11	117	108	42	39
Subordinate-Oriented	62	58	20	19	141	120	51	43

Table 10.9 Question #2: Comparison of Multiple and Single Responses by Mapping Cluster

As can be seen, whilst the totals and percentages have changed slightly, the conclusions remain the same. The implication is that while respondents may have expressed a number of activities performed, when these are consolidated into clusters, they represent different facets of the same broad area.

10.1.2.2 Tabulation Based on Total Number of Mentions

Some individuals may provide multiple responses. Therefore, the percentage of responses can be tabulated on the basis of the total number of mentions by management activities (Table 10.10) and are presented graphically (Figure 10.7).

What Were Your Boss's Expectations When You Took This Position?

	Canada		Japan		p
	#	%	#	%	
Plan	7	1	16	4	.022*
Administer	118	23	39	9	.000*
Produce Results	89	18	25	6	.000*
Lead	8	2	57	13	.000*
Improve/Change	34	7	44	10	.047*
Develop Subordinates	22	4	47	11	.000*
Activate People/Department	32	6	37	8	.146
Communicate	15	3	11	2	.389
Relate to Superior	18	4	19	4	.291
Interface with others	7	1	13	3	.173
Own performance	51	16	31	7	.062
Project specialist	19	4	13	3	.290
Personal skills	16	3	23	5	.082
Overall contribution	43	9	34	8	.430
Other	6	1	12	3	.072
Nothing/Blank	20	4	20	5	.346

*p < .05

Table 10.10 Question #2: Tabulation Based on Total Number of Mentions by Management Activities

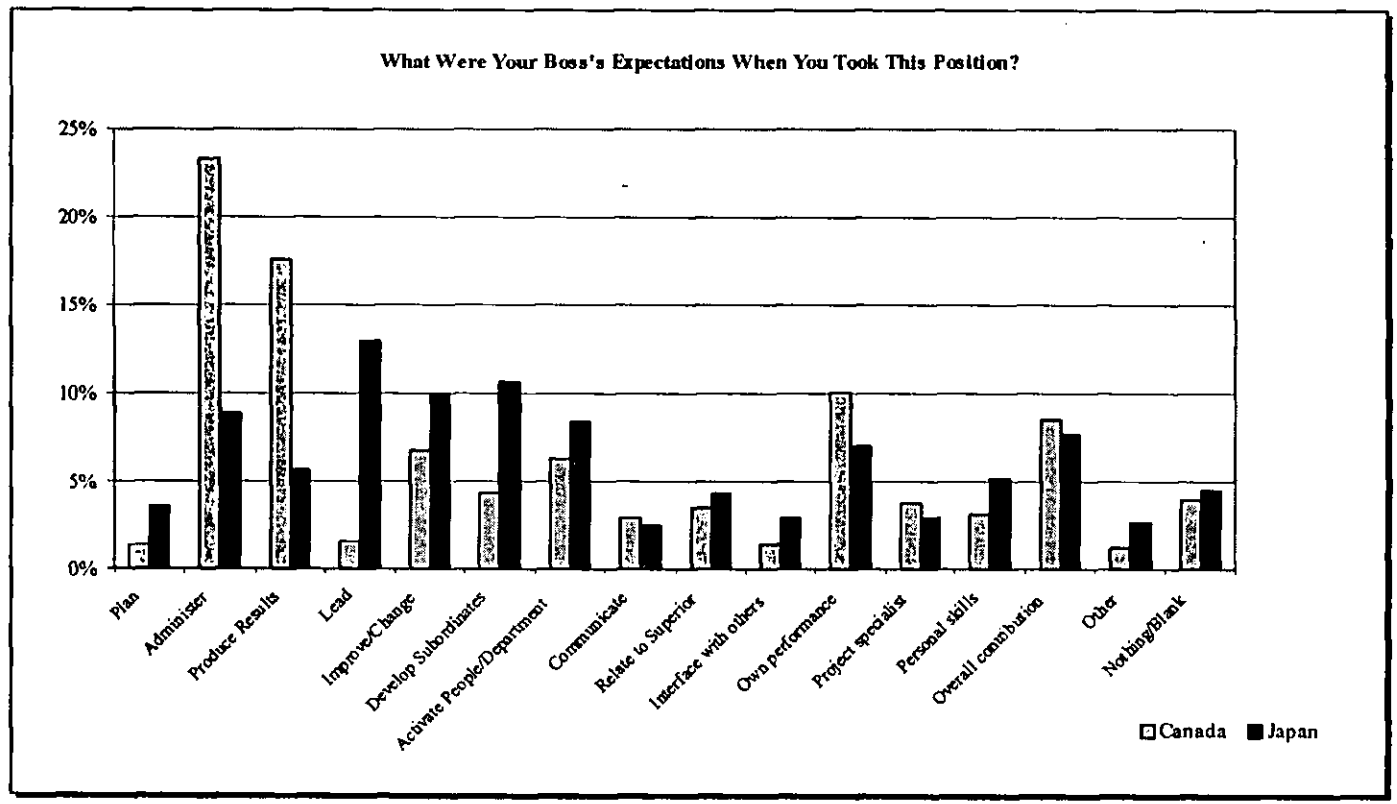


Figure 10.7 **Question #2: Graph Based on Total Number of Mentions by Management Activities**

While the percentages vary slightly from those based upon the number of questionnaires (Table 10.6), the findings remain the same. The argument can be made that the latter is the preferable method, as it reflects the percentage of individuals who have expressed an opinion on that given subject matter.

10.1.3 Overview of Question #2

When asked "What were your Boss's expectations when you took this position", the Canadian and Japanese answers differed in two ways. It would seem that there are two different perceptions of the respective roles in their working life. This is best encapsulated by the Founder and Chairman of Kyocera, Mr. Kazuo Inamori (1995), who states that "If your motivation and methods are virtuous, you need not worry much about the results." Bower *et al* (1975) propound that: "one never changes the condition which one proposes ultimately to effect; instead, one changes things (makes inputs of a kind) presumed to lead to it", this theory is widely shared in Japanese circles. Both these statements reinforce the concept that goals are expected outcomes and that the actions taken will affect their realisation. A key dilemma for the respondents is whether to focus on the end or the means.

There has been a general assumption, because of the recognised results of world-class Japanese organisations and their extensive use and display of goals, that Japanese first-line managers would be more vocal and specific about the end-results or outcomes as compared to their Canadian counterparts. However, through the process of tabulation and analysis, the opposite proves to be true. This is not to say that the Japanese do not have specific measures of performance which they have to meet; on the contrary, the

workplace is a clear evidence of goals and visual communication (Mestre, 1999) by their use of posters displaying company, divisional and departmental goals.

On the basis of the tabulation of the responses, both as a percentage of number of questionnaires and total number of mentions, the results indicate that Canadian first-line managers focus on position whilst their Japanese counterparts focus on the inter-relationships within their departments.

10.2 QUESTION #8 "WHAT DO YOU EXPECT TO ACCOMPLISH THIS YEAR?"

While Question #2 focuses on the boss's expectations, in this question, the respondent is asked for his/her own expectations for the year, in terms of accomplishment. A total of thirty different categories were derived from the questionnaires. As a result of the mapping process, six clusters evolved from these categories.

10.2.1 Categories Definitions and Tabulations

The categories which evolved from the individual responses are represented in a glossary (Table 10.11). A straight tabulation of the results was carried out for both the Canadian and Japanese data (Table 10.12), listed in the order in which the topics were encountered, and graphically presented (Figure 10.8) and in descending order (Figure 10.9). For easy referral, each category has been allocated a letter. However, in this given form, it was difficult to assess the differences between the two populations. Therefore, using the mapping process already described, the data was then grouped by topical areas.

What Do You Expect To Accomplish This Year?

Personal: Personal non-task objectives, such as to "achieve my personal goal", "have a child", "leave before the year is out" or "develop my character".
Performance: Personal performance, such as to "work hard", "reach my sales goals", or "complete the work I'm in charge of".
Promotion: Increase in responsibility
Recognition: Acknowledgement of performance separate from promotion and monetary recognition.
Management Interaction: Interaction with higher levels of management.
Bonus: Financial benefit, either as a one-off or permanent, such as a raise.
Learn: Desired acquisition of new skills to enhance performance.
Procedures: Need to systematise the operations.
Plan: Arranging and working out activities of the department in advance.
Administer: Control of the department's affairs, more in a passive role of a caretaker.
Communicate: General interactions related to the function.
Lead: Process of influencing the direction and attitudes of the group.
Interdepartmental: Activities interfacing with other groups in the organisation.
Unit Related Performance: All statements which reflect the carrying out of departmental activities and results.
Reorganise: Restructuring or reallocation of responsibilities within the department.
Improve: Department performance and acknowledgement for change, either in volume, productivity or/and profitability.
Subordinates Performance: Individual's performance as compared to the sum of the parts which relates to the department.
Train: Managerial role of training subordinates.
Motivate/Activate: Role of manager to motivate the department staff.
Corporate Results: Any macro-level performance indicators, such as profitability or volume; outcomes to which the department is only a partial contribution.
Task: Specific outcomes which are descriptive to tasks to be performed.
Produce: Reflects a quantitative nature of output.
Project: Specific outcomes of a non-continuing nature but with a clear start and end.
More Resources: Need to secure additional resources either in the form of inventory, workers or equipment.
Working Conditions: Any environmental factors affecting human performance.
Customers: External entities using the end product.
Team: Managers' learning about the intricacies of the department under their charge.
Fostering: Nurturing aspect of the manager's role in regard to his/her subordinates.
Other: Any response of low frequency.
Blank/Don't Know: Not completed or indicative of the person's lack of cognisance.

Table 10.11 Question #8: Glossary of Defined Categories

What Do You Expect To Accomplish This Year?

	For Referral	Canada		Japan		p
		#	%	#	%	
Personal	A	17	5	11	4	.262
Performance	B	28	9	14	5	.046*
Promotion	C	21	7	13	5	.192
Recognition	D	12	4	4	1	.061
Management Interaction	E	11	4	7	3	.326
Bonus	F	7	2	3	1	.224
Learn	G	19	6	31	11	.019*
Procedures	H	9	3	19	7	.019*
Plan	I	7	2	12	4	.114
Administer	J	15	5	12	4	.473
Communicate	K	10	3	5	2	.210
Lead	L	2	1	3	1	.443
Interdepartmental	M	1	0	1	0	.719
Unit Related Performance	N	46	15	42	15	.483
Reorganise	O	20	6	16	6	.446
Improve	P	97	31	45	16	.000*
Subordinates Performance	Q	7	2	7	3	.514
Train	R	20	6	17	6	.518
Motivate/Activate	S	23	7	18	7	.405
Corporate Results	T	27	9	17	6	.160
Task	U	4	1	0	0	.078
Produce	V	8	3	1	0	.029*
Project	W	48	15	54	19	.111
More Resources	X	17	5	4	1	.007*
Working Conditions	Y	3	1	18	6	.000*
Customers	Z	10	3	9	3	.576
Team	CC	0	0	9	3	.001*
Fostering	DD	0	0	11	4	.000*
Other	AA	6	2	8	3	.307
Blank/Don't Know	BB	19	6	15	5	.436

*p < .05

Table 10.12 Question #8: Tabulation of Responses

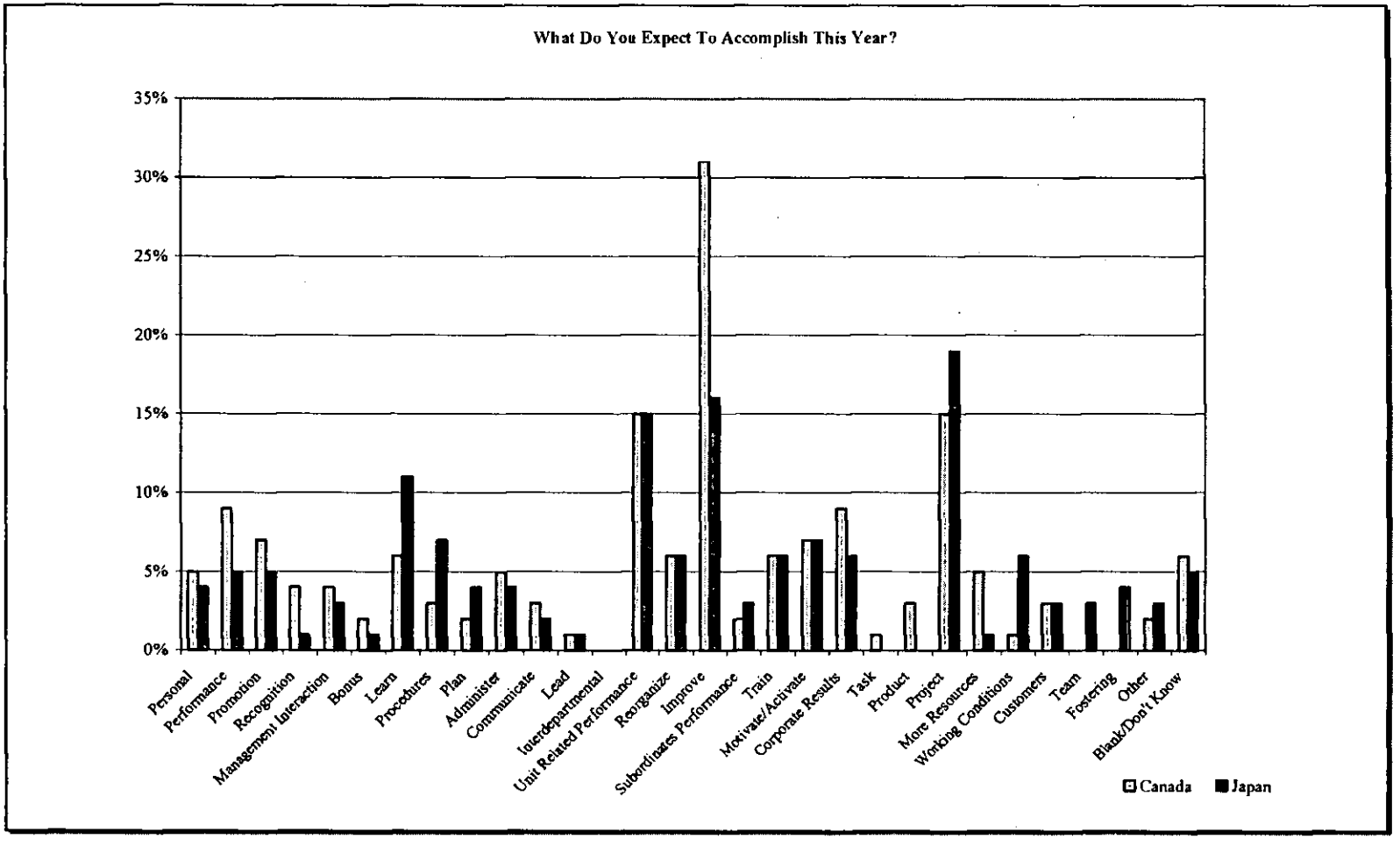


Figure 10.8 Question #8: Graph of Responses

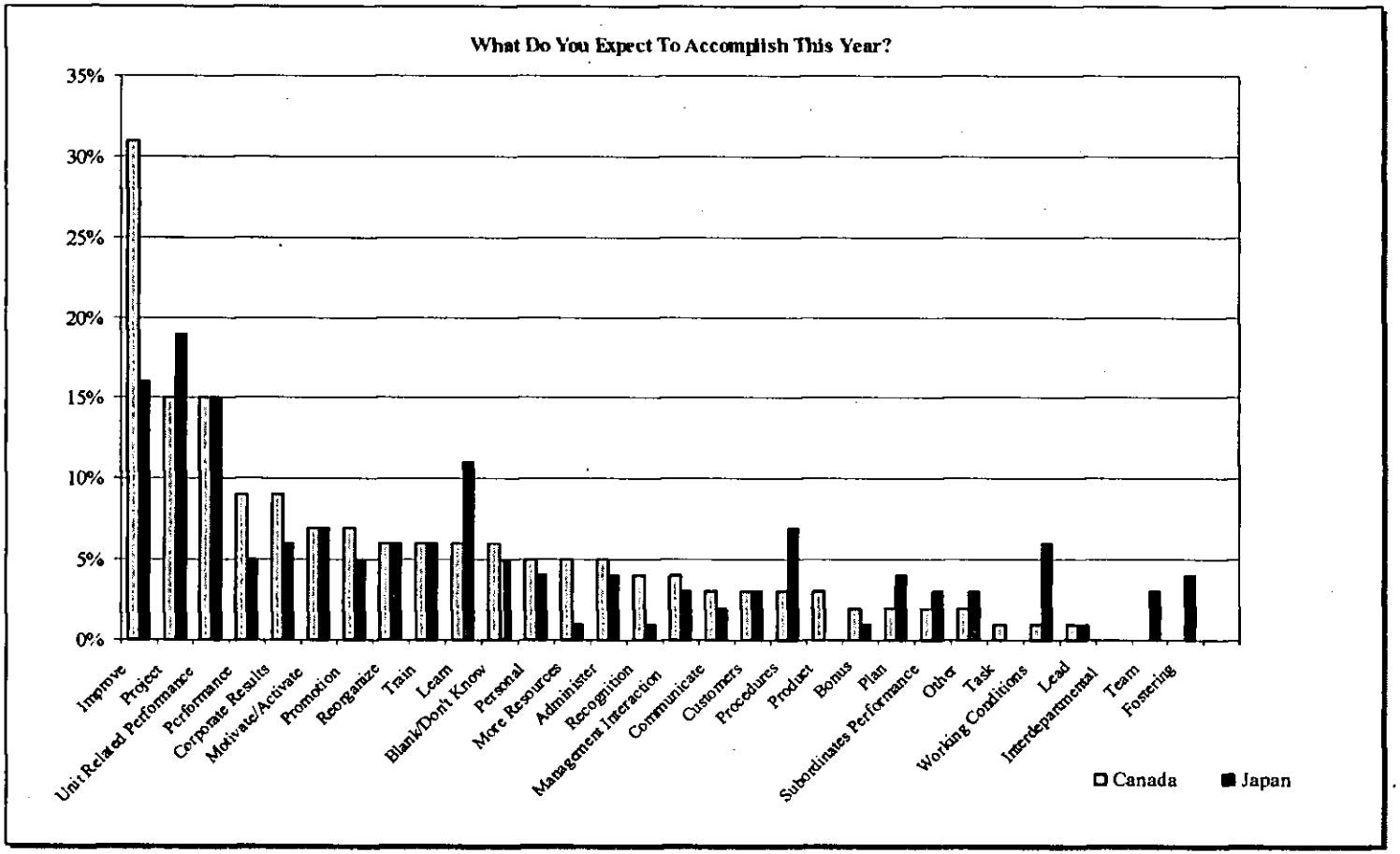


Figure 10.9 Question #8: Graph of Responses in Descending Order

With 30 distinct categories, assuming a uniform probability distribution, a 3 to 5 percent response rate would be expected for each category. Of those exceeding 10%, three relate to performance and are acknowledged as important by both populations. The improve category is mentioned by a 2 to 1 margin by the Canadians as compared to the Japanese who, on their part share a greater desire to gain insights in their operations compared to the Canadians.

These results lead one to conclude that performance is clearly a key concern of both populations. However the means to accomplish this may be perceived in a totally different mind set by the two populations. Because of the large number of categories the mapping of these various responses into clusters should hold in elucidating the implications of the individual responses.

10.2.2 Mapping of Responses

Thirty different categories were raised during the screening of the responses. With such a number of categories, the challenge is to identify common features in order to discern any underlying patterns (Osborne, 1990; Miles & Huberman, 1994). The cognitive mapping process provides a suitable technique for such an aggregation process of clustering various categories into themes (Khattri & Miles, 1993; Maxwell, 1996). Six distinct clusters, describing the ulterior objective of the various categories, seem to encompass the various responses: personal issues, subordinates issues, departmental function, position, work environment and results/outcomes (Figure 10.10). The Customers, Blank/Don't Know and Other categories clearly do not fit any of the clusters and are thus excluded from the process.

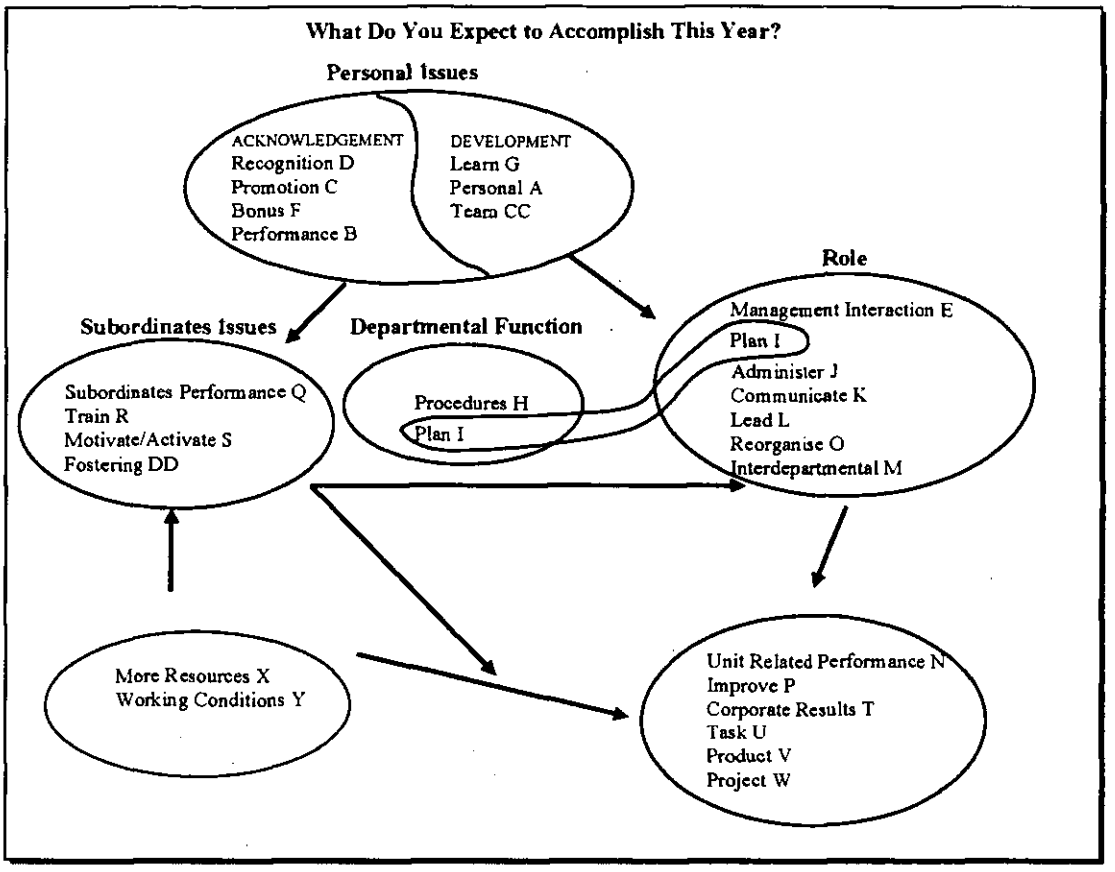


Figure 10.10 **Question #8: Cognitive Mapping of Accomplishment Expectations**

As can be seen, the Personal Issues cluster is composed of two groups: one relates to the various forms of personal achievement whilst the other addresses the need for individual's development through the enhancement of personal skills. All other clusters relate to the aggregation of categories which share the same respective focus and where each may appear distinct because of what is being measured. Only three categories are not represented in the mapping: customer-related responses, other and blank/don't know; this is because they do not readily fit into any other potential cluster. Table 10.13 provides a definition for each of the clusters. Table 10.14 shows the total and percentage for each cluster, based upon the number of responses for the categories that are included.

What Do You Expect to Accomplish This Year?

Personal Issues:

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT – All forms of recognition such as promotion, recognition and bonus.

DEVELOPMENT – Acquiring personal skills, learning the inner workings of the team, personal decisions affecting one's career, and personal performance.

Role: Administrative activities such as devising procedures, planning, general administration, communication, leading and reorganising as well as interacting with management and other departments.

Departmental Function: Manager's performing the mechanics/intricacies of the departmental operations.

Subordinates Issues: Activities with main focus to affect the behaviour, performance, and/or career of subordinates.

Results/Outcomes: Accomplishment of a certain output, task or project needs.

Work Environment: Need for resources, whether financial, human or equipment, and assurance of good working conditions such as safety.

Table 10.13 Question #8: Cognitive Mapping of Accomplishment Expectations – Definitions

What Do You Expect to Accomplish This Year?

		Canada		Japan		p
		#	%	#	%	
Personal Issues						
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT						
Promotion	C	21	7	13	5	.192
Recognition	D	12	4	4	1	.061
Performance	B	28	9	14	5	.046*
Bonus	F	7	2	3	1	.224
Sub-Total		68	22	34	12	
DEVELOPMENT						
Learn	G	19	6	31	11	.019*
Team	CC	0	0	9	3	.001*
Personal	A	17	5	11	4	.262
Sub-Total		36	11	51	18	
Total		104	33	85	30	
Departmental Function						
Plan	I	7	2	12	4	.114
Procedure	H	9	3	19	7	.019*
Total		16	5	31	11	
Role						
Management Interaction	E	11	3	7	3	.326
Plan	I	7	2	12	4	.114
Administer	J	15	5	12	4	.473
Communicate	K	10	3	5	2	.210
Lead	L	2	1	3	1	.443
Interdepartmental	M	1	0	1	0	.719
Reorganise	O	20	6	16	6	.446
Total		66	20	56	20	
Subordinates Issues						
Subs Performance	Q	7	2	7	2	.514
Train	R	20	6	17	6	.518
Motivate/Activate	S	23	7	19	7	.405
Fostering	DD	0	0	11	4	.000*
Total		50	16	54	19	
Results/Outcomes						
Unit Related Performance	N	46	15	42	15	.483
Improve	P	97	31	45	16	.000*
Corporate Results	T	27	8	17	6	.160
Task, Product, Project	U,V,W	60	19	54	19	
Total		230	73	158	57	
Work Environment						
More Resources	X	17	5	4	2	.007*
Working Conditions	Y	3	1	18	6	.000*
Total		20	6	22	8	

***p < .05**

Table 10.14 Question #8: Frequency Distribution of Accomplishment Expectations

Working with aggregates can mask important differences. The Personal Issues cluster, as shown in Figure 10.10, shows little difference in outlook between the Canadian and Japanese managers (33% vs. 30%). However, a totally different picture unfolds when finer definitions of clusters such as personal concerns, personal recognition and personal development are used (Table 10.15). While both populations express the same degree of interest, the difference becomes very much clearer when the distinction is made between the various forms of personal recognition and development.

		Canada		Japan	
		#	%	#	%
Personal	A	17	5	11	4
Personal Recognition					
Performance	B	28	22	14	12
Promotion	C	21		13	
Recognition	D	12		4	
Bonus	F	7		3	
		68		34	
Personal Development					
Learn	G	19	6	31	14
Team	CC	0		9	
		19		40	
Total		104	33	85	30

Table 10.15 Question #8: Personal Issues Responses

Similarly, when activities related to the management of the department are scrutinised, another picture comes to the fore. This picture underscores the planning emphasis that Japanese place as part of what they expect to accomplish.

		Canada			Japan		
		#		%	#		%
Procedures	H	9	16	5	19	31	11
Plan	I	7			12		
Administer	J	15	59	19	12	44	16
Communicate	K	10			5		
Lead	L	2			3		
Reorganise	O	20			16		
Management Interaction	E	11			7		
Interdepartmental	M	1			1		
Total			75	24		75	27

Table 10.16 Question #8: Role Responses

As previously pointed out, responses to open-ended questions can be multi-faceted. Hence, when aggregating into a mapping cluster, there is the possibility that the answers provided by individuals have multiple components that fit various categories resulting in a multiple count as compared to a single count of that individual.

Some of these elements, although different, can fit under the same cluster, thus double counting the responses of one individual into one cluster. In order to assess the impact of such a possibility, Table 10.17 shows the actual comparison between the count of multiple responses and single counts for each cluster. As for Question #2, the differences between multiple and single counts do not affect the overall conclusions.

What Do You Expect to Accomplish This Year?

		Canada				Japan			
		# Mult.	# Sing.	% Mult.	% Sing.	# Mult.	# Sing.	% Mult.	% Sing.
Personal Issues									
ACKNOWLEDGMENT									
Promotion	C	68	59	19	19	34	32	12	12
Recognition	D								
Bonus	F								
Performance	B								
DEVELOPMENT									
Learn	G	19	19	6	6	40	38	14	14
Team	CC								
Personal	A	17	17	5	5	11	11	4	4
Role and Departmental Function									
Procedures	H	16	16	5	5	31	30	11	11
Plan	I								
Administer	J	66	58	21	19	56	52	20	18
Plan	I								
Communicate	K								
Lead	L								
Reorganise	O								
Interdepartmental	M								
Management Interaction	E								
Subordinates' Issues									
Subordinates Performance	Q	50	46	16	15	54	47	19	17
Train	R								
Motivate/Activate	S								
Fostering	DD								
Results/Outcomes									
Unit Related Performance	N	230	194	73	62	158	135	57	49
Improve	P								
Corporate Results	T								
Task, Product, Project	U,V,W								
Work Environment									
More Resources	X	20	19	6	6	22	22	8	8
Working Conditions	Y								

Table 10.17 **Question #8: Single and Multiple Count Responses by Mapping Group**

The differences in frequency between single and multiple counts for each of the clusters are minimal. All but the results/outcomes cluster show little or no difference. While the results/outcomes show a difference (73% vs 62% for Canadians and 57% vs 49% for the Japanese), the findings are still 3 to 1 compared to the other categories making that

cluster the largest whatever method is used. Single versus multiple counts does not affect the conclusions.

10.2.3 Overview of Question #8

The frequency response for many of the topics is similar for the Canadian and Japanese respondents. Both groups show a great concern for performance, but the Canadian data shows a much greater frequency in improving results/outcomes for the year. Three distinct areas can be highlighted:

- Both groups are 'subordinate' conscious though the Japanese reveal a greater concern for the person, the subordinate's career and his/her working conditions.
- In the area of role, the Japanese show a greater emphasis on structure as reflected by the need for 'Planning' and 'Procedures', that is the formality in direction.
- On the personal dimension, the Canadians display a greater concern for personal recognition, while the Japanese express a need to improve their knowledge base.

10.3 QUESTIONS #2 AND #8 – A SUMMARY

Question #2 "What were your Boss's expectations when you took this position?" and Question #8 "What do you plan to accomplish this year?" are both addressing the topic of goals. The first is based upon the subordinate's perception of the boss's expectation and the other relates more on personal resolve. The results of these two questions can be summarised as follows:

1. Goals can be multi-faceted in the minds of individuals. The various activities reflected can be traced to the various roles that first-line managers are called to play as well as outcomes which have to be discharged.
2. Canadian respondents are predominantly concerned with task/result oriented outcomes (73%) as compared to all other responses combined (79%) (Table 10.14). The statistics illustrate that the Japanese are similarly concerned with results (57%) but other responses account for 84%, thus showing a greater propensity to consider the whole of the organisation.

3. Spear & Bowen (1999) point out that important differences can be found in the details, as illustrated in Table 10.15. Both Canadian and Japanese managers are concerned with their individual performance. However, Canadian managers tend to focus on their personal recognition (22% - 12%) whereas the Japanese managers concentrate on increasing their own effectiveness (6% - 14%).

4. The greater emphasis by Canadian managers on task/outcome contrasts with the Japanese concern for subordinates, continual improvement and planning. These symptomatic differences place into focus the question whether the emphasis should be placed on the end or the means.

5. Although the degree of intensity measured by the frequency rate for these factors is different for the two questions, the relative importance of the two top areas of concern expressed by each population, are consistent.

Since both the individual categories and clusters pertaining to the two questions were derived independently from the raw data, Table 10.18 reconciles the findings respective to areas they share in common. The Canadians are dominant in their emphasis in Task/Outcome and Personal Benefit whereas the Japanese place a greater emphasis on Continual Improvement and in creating a positive Working Relationship with Subordinates.

		Canada	Japan	Source
Task/Outcome				
Question #2	Current Operations	66%	23%	(Table 10:7)
Question #8	Improve (P)	31%	16%	(Table 10:12)
Personal Benefit				
Question #2	Own Performance	16%	11%	(Table 10:6)
Question #8	Personal Performance (B,C,D,F)	22%	12%	(Table 10:15)
Continual Improvement				
Question #2	Change-Oriented	15%	42%	(Table 10:7)
Question #8	Departmental Function	5%	11%	(Table 10:16)
Subordinate Working Relationships				
Question #2	Subordinate-Oriented	20%	51%	(Table 10:7)
Question #8	Work Climate (Y,CC,DD)	1%	13%	(Table 10:12)

Table 10.18 Comparison of Question #2 and #8: Response Frequency

The results of these findings are consistent with literature on Japanese management practices. The responses illustrate that corporate practices do impact on the responses of first-line managers.

CHAPTER 11

SELF-EFFICACY/TRAINING NEEDS

A man should first direct himself in the way he should go. Only then should he instruct others.

I hear, I forget
I see and I remember
I do and I understand
Chinese Proverb

11.0 PREAMBLE

The element of Self-efficacy/Training Needs is one of the key factors identified in the Generic Performance Model. Related literature (Bandura, 1986; Phillips & Gully, 1997; Vande Walle *et* al, 2001) recognises that, for individuals to have a sense of being up to the task in their current position, training is one of the prime requirements. While the topic of training is extensive, when coupled with the perspective of self-efficacy, the perspective shifts to one of adequacy and perceived limitations. Question #3, "What Training Do You Wish You Had in Preparation For This Position?" explores the various training wants of first-line managers.

11.1 QUESTION #3 "WHAT TRAINING DO YOU WISH YOU HAD IN PREPARATION FOR THIS POSITION?"

Bandura (1986) posited that the belief of possessing skills and capabilities was key to achieve a certain level of performance. The converse to this perspective is to determine the nature of the perceived needs which might detract individuals from that belief of possessing skills and capabilities required. This section explores the nature of those needs.

11.1.1 Categories Definitions and Tabulations

Because of various backgrounds and job situations, a wide range of training needs has emerged as perceived by respondents in their current position. In analysing the questionnaires, the coding procedure yielded a total of twenty-five categories; with their definitions, they are presented in Table 11.1. The actual count is shown as a tabulation (Table 11.2) and graphically (Figure 11.1). Figure 11.2 displays the same data in descending order, where the dominant Canadian responses are on the right and the dominant Japanese responses on the left.

What Training Do You Wish You Had in Preparation For This Position?

Management: Administrative elements of the respondent's position.
Product Knowledge: Need for greater knowledge of product or service.
None: General degree of satisfaction with current level of knowledge.
Finance, Accounting: Responses related to these disciplines.
Communication: Overall need for interaction with the different constituencies.
Computer Knowledge: Need for basic skills in this area.
Business: Referring to specific functions such as marketing, finance and business law.
Global: Concern beyond the confines of the country.
Technical: Need for knowledge in the 'mechanics' of the operations.
Personal: Personal as compared to job-related needs.
Supervisory: People management skills mainly in the area of motivation.
Language: Need for foreign language study, usually English.
Legal: Concern over legal matters.
People - Interpersonal: Need for skills such as conflict resolution.
Corporate Policies: Need for a better understanding of company policies and procedures.
Experience: Need for various experience.
Formal Education: Need for a University degree
Position's Roles: Need for better understanding of the role to be performed.
Time Management: Need to learn to cope with planning and constraints such as time.
Mentoring/OTJ Training: Need for guidance and advice.
Learning Subordinates Work: Need to know the intricacies of the work done in his/her department.
Social Environment: Need for better understanding of the social and environmental concerns.
Fostering Talent, How to Train: Need to improve the incumbent's skills in training subordinates.
Other: Responses, 3 or less, not fitting any of the above categories.
Blank:

Table 11.1 Question #3: Glossary of Defined Categories of Self-Efficacy/Training Needs Responses

What Training Do You Wish You Had in Preparation For This Position?

	For Referral	Canada		Japan		p
		#	%	#	%	
Management	A	30	10	43	16	.020*
Product Knowledge	B	11	4	6	2	.234
None needed	C	74	24	49	18	.046
Finance, Accounting	D	15	5	11	4	.389
Communication	E	11	4	0	0	.001*
Computer Knowledge	F	26	8	20	7	.368
Business	G	13	4	0	0	.000*
Global	H	2	1	6	2	.107
Technical	I	29	9	29	10	.363
Personal	J	23	7	9	3	.021*
Supervisory	K	24	8	0	0	.000*
Language	L	2	1	18	7	.000*
Legal	M	4	1	12	4	.021*
People - Interpersonal	N	36	12	20	7	.051
Corporate Policies	O	18	6	12	4	.277
Experience	P	13	4	12	4	.537
Formal Education	Q	20	6	0	0	.000*
Position's Role	R	6	2	11	4	.107
Time Management	S	7	2	0	0	.011*
Mentoring/OJT	T	18	6	0	0	.000*
Learning Subordinate's Work	W	0	0	15	5	.000*
Social Environment	X	0	0	4	1	.048
Fostering Talent, How to Train	Y	0	0	8	3	.002*
Other	U	6	2	11	4	.107
Blank	V	5	2	25	9	.000*

*p<.05

Table 11.2 Question #3: Tabulation of Responses for Self-Efficacy/Training Needs

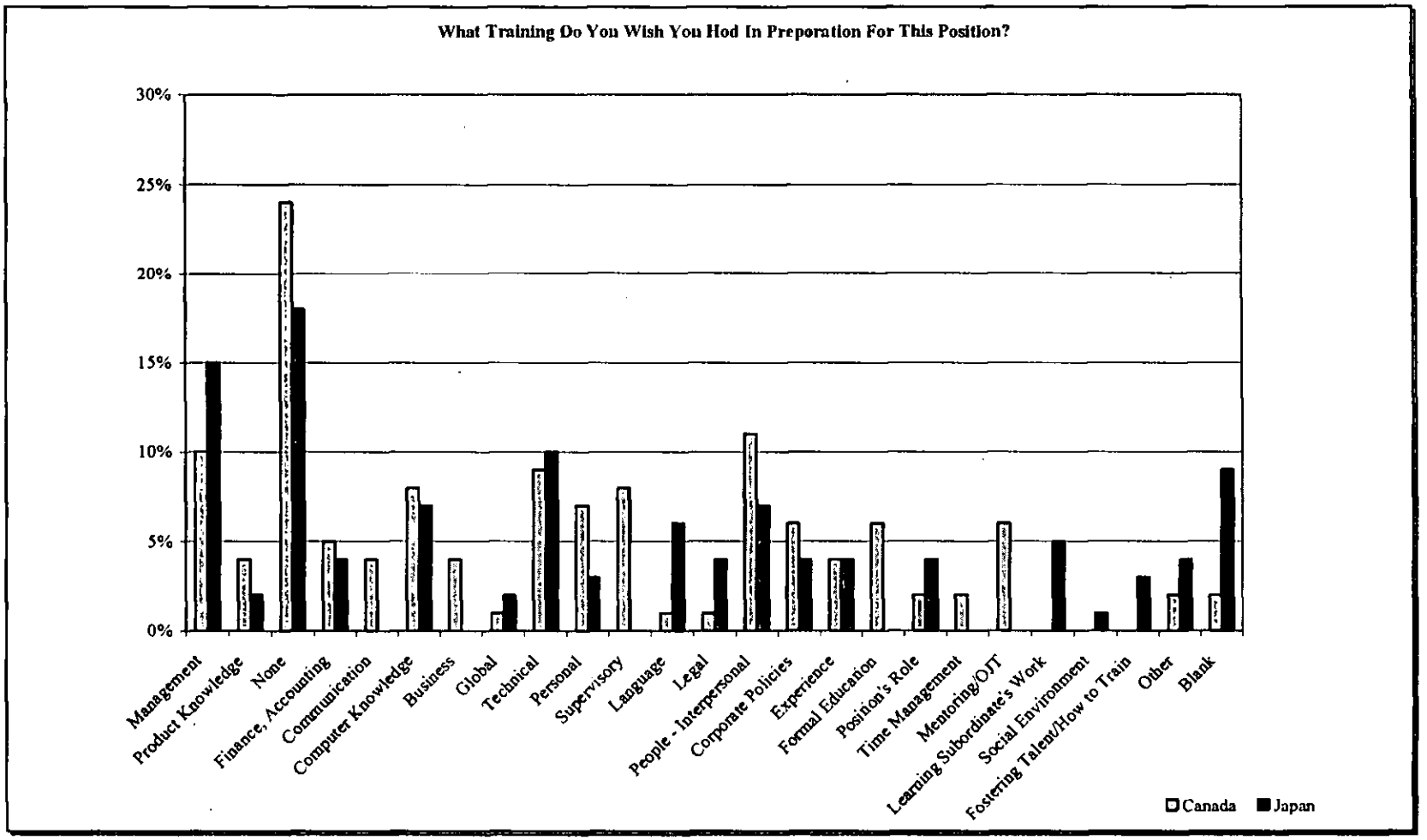


Figure 11.1 Question #3: Graph of Responses for Self-Efficacy/Training Needs

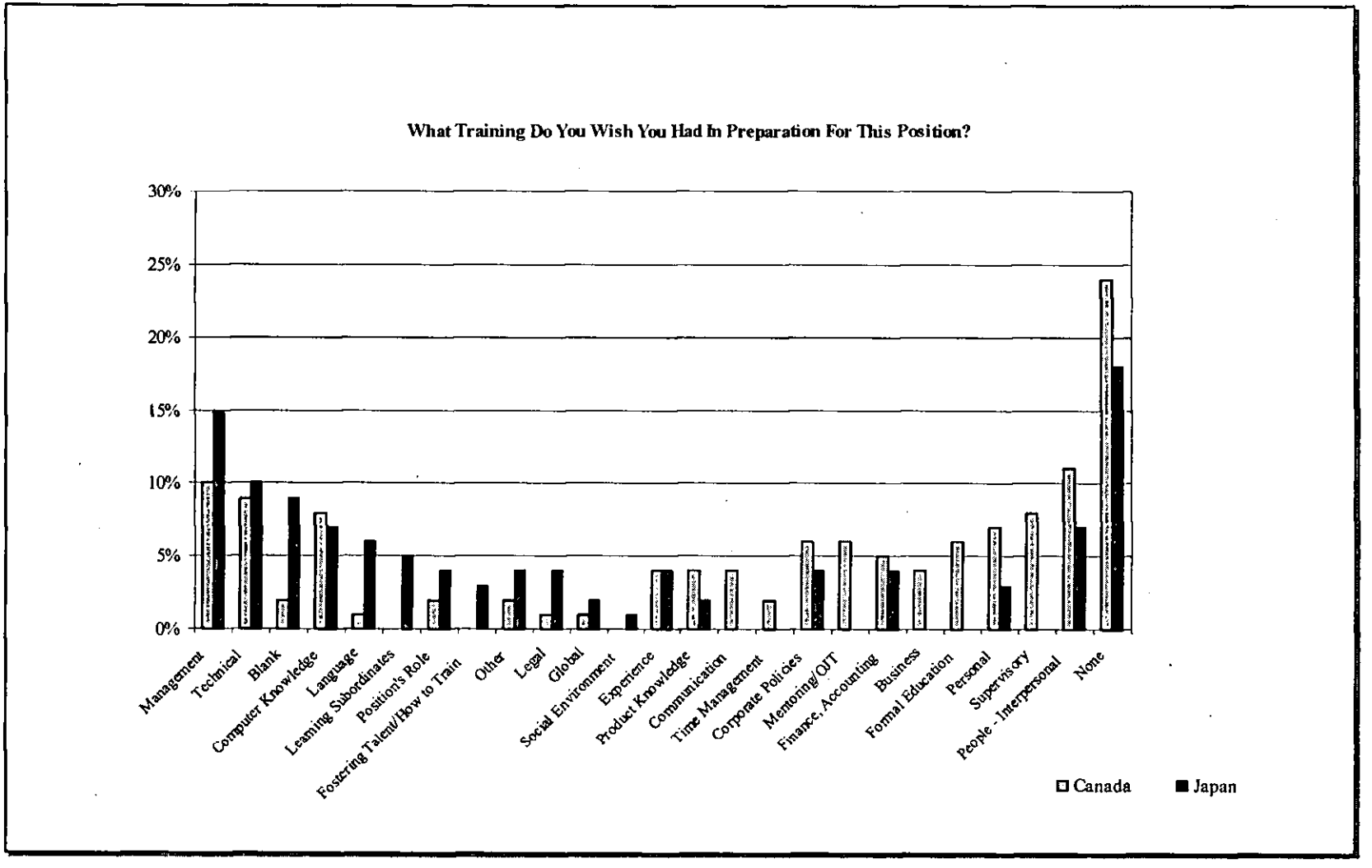


Figure 11.2 Question #3: Graph of Self-Efficacy/Training Needs in Descending Order

Certain responses were unique to either population. For example, Canadian first-line managers acknowledged the need for mentoring/OJT while none of the Japanese identified that form of training need as they are mentored by their *senpai* as part of OJT. Similarly, a university degree is identified as desirable by Canadians, while for the Japanese this is a must for those with aspirations to climb the ladder of management and thus, a zero response rate. While English is the global business language, the Japanese, depending to a great extent on world trade, recognise the need for a foreign language, usually English. The Canadian responses are clearly silent in this area.

For both populations, the largest response is that no training was required. If blank response is construed as none required, both populations would average 27%. All other areas are significantly lower in percentage, possibly due to the diversity of backgrounds and work expectations. However, when each category raised is examined, common features indicate that broader clusters of training needs are appropriate.

11.1.2 Mapping of Responses in Relation to Self-Efficacy/Training Needs

Using the mapping process, the twenty-five categories generated to six major clusters, graphically presented in Figure 11.3 and tabulated in Table 11.3:

1. **General:** This reflects the need for general knowledge in three distinct areas, namely business or management such as time management, experiential development such as OJT and job rotation and learning more about the position itself and the activities/practices of the department.

2. **Discipline:** Narrower in focus, this relates to discipline-oriented knowledge through the use of formal courses such as in finance, computing, legal or technical knowledge; the formal recognition of a university degree, whilst not discipline-specific, can be considered as part of academic training in this cluster.

3. **Corporate Outlook:** This combines all responses that are broader than the direct responsibilities of the first-line managers, including corporate policies and

practices, greater understanding of products and services and of the organisation as a whole.

4. **Outward Outlook:** This grouping looks beyond the confines of the department and the company to socio-economic factors. Because of the demands for a global perspective, language requirements are also included.

5. **People Management:** This special category includes such factors as supervisory skills, communications and the development of subordinates.

6. **Non-Responsive:** This cluster is a composite of the statement by the respondent that indicated no further training was required or left blank, the assumption being that no needs needed to be identified.

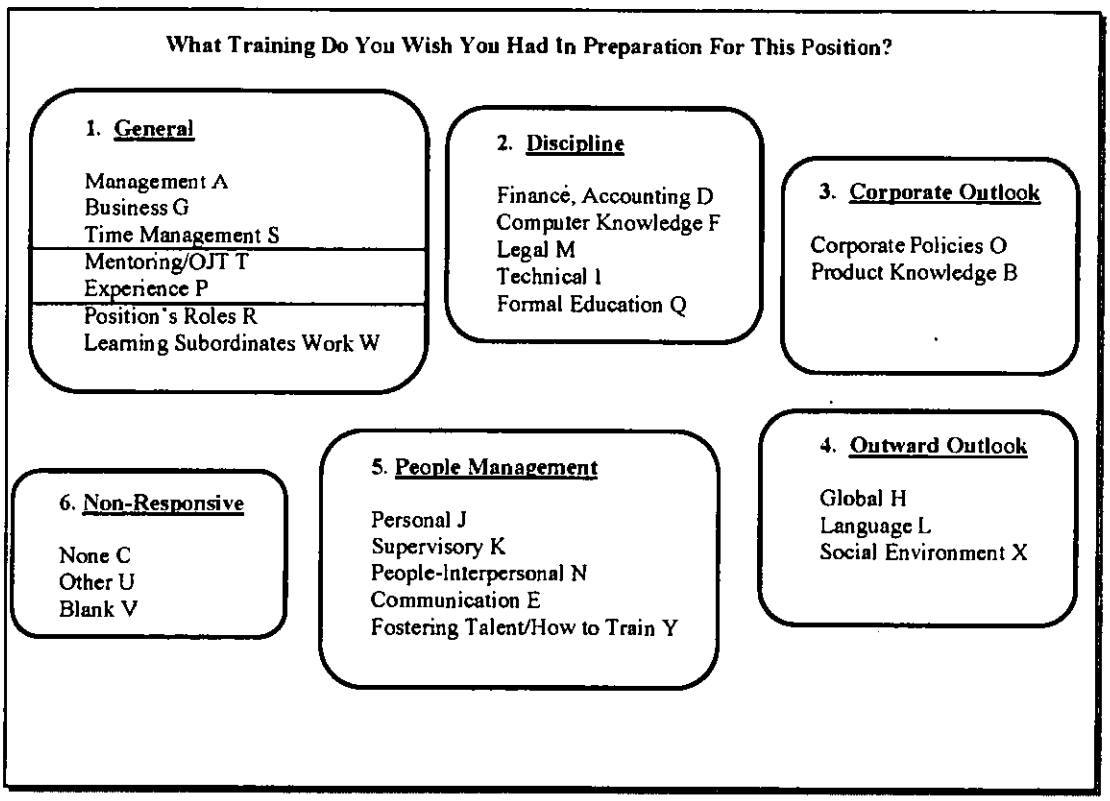


Figure 11.3 Question #3: Cognitive Mapping of Self-Efficacy/Training Needs

What Training Do You Wish You Had In Preparation For This Position?

		Canada		Japan		p
		#	%	#	%	
General						
Management	A	30	10	43	16	
Business	G	13	4	0	0	
Time Management	S	7	2	0	0	
Sub-Total		50	16	43	16	.478
Mentoring/OJT	T	18	6	0	0	
Experience Other Job	P	13	4	12	4	
Sub-Total		31	10	12	4	.007*
Position	R	6	2	11	4	
Learning about Area	W	0	0	15	5	
Sub-Total		6	2	26	9	.000*
Total		87	28	81	29	.209
Discipline						
Finance, Accounting	D	15	5	11	4	
Computer Knowledge	F	26	8	20	7	
Legal	M	4	1	12	4	
Formal Education	Q	29	9	29	10	
Total		74	24	72	26	.315
Corporate Outlook						
Corporate Policies	O	18	6	12	4	
Product Knowledge	B	11	4	6	2	
Total		28	9	18	6	.129
Outward Outlook						
Global	H	2	1	6	2	
Language	L	2	1	18	7	
Social Environment	X	0	0	4	1	
Total		4	1	27	10	.000*
People Management						
Personal	J	23	7	9	3	
Supervisory	K	24	8	0	0	
People-Interpersonal	N	36	12	20	7	
Communication	E	11	4	0	0	
Fostering Talent/How To Train	Y	0	0	8	3	
Total		94	30	37	13	.000*
Non-Responsive						
Other	U	6	2	11	4	
Blank	V	5	2	25	9	
None	C	74	24	49	18	
Total		85	27	78	31	.430

*p < .05

Table 11.3 Question #3: Frequency Distribution of Self-Efficacy/Training Needs By Cluster

What Training Do You Wish You Had In Preparation For This Position?

	Canada				Japan			
	#	#	%	%	#	#	%	%
	Mult.	Sing.	Mult.	Sing.	Mult.	Sing.	Mult.	Sing.
General	87	80	28	26	81	80	29	29
Discipline	74	67	24	21	72	69	26	25
Corporate Outlook	29	28	9	9	18	17	7	6
Outward Outlook	4	4	1	1	28	27	10	0
People Management	94	83	30	26	37	37	13	13
Non-Responsive	85	85	27	27	85	78	31	28

Table 11.4 Question #3: Comparison of Multiple and Single Responses by Mapping Clusters for Self-Efficacy/Training Needs

The comparison of clusters using single and multiple counts [as explained for Question #2] shows very little difference in terms of the percentage results and statistical significance ($p<.05$) (Table 11.4). Out of the six clusters, four have a frequency higher than 20% for both populations. One area showing the largest difference between the two populations is with the need for people management skills with the Canadians at 26% and 13% for the Japanese, further underscoring the need for training of first-line managers.

As pointed out in the phenomenological literature (Osborne, 1994), the data can be organised in a number of ways. For the General cluster, this could be divided in sub-clusters: (a) Management is related to managerial practices, (b) mentoring/OJT and experience of other jobs reflect the need to broaden horizons, and (c) Learning more about the position and the nature of departmental work indicate the importance of being "department aware", as demonstrated below:

	For Referral	Canada		Japan		p
		#	%	#	%	
Specific Knowledge						
Position's Roles	R	6	2	11	4	
Learning Subordinates	W	0	0	15	5	
Total		6	2	26	9	.000*

*p<.05

	For Referral	Canada		Japan		p
		#	%	#	%	
Experiential Knowledge						
Mentoring/OJT	T	18	6	0	0	
Experience	P	13	4	12	4	
Total		31	10	12	4	.009*

*p<.05

Further analysis indicates that the cluster of People Management could also be divided: (i) People Administrative Skills and (ii) People Development, as illustrated below:

	For Referral	Canada		Japan		p
		#	%	#	%	
People Administrative Skills						
Personnel	J	23	7	9	3	
Supervisory	K	24	8	0	0	
Interpersonal	N	36	12	20	7	
Communications	E	11	4	0	0	
Total		94	31	29	10	.000*
People Development						
Fostering Talent/How to Train	W	0	0	15	15	
Learning Subordinates	Y	0	0	6	2	
Total		0	0	21	7	.000*

These results indicate a fundamental difference in managerial philosophy whereby the Canadians (31% vs 10%) focus on the administrative skills while the Japanese reflect more on a coaching role (21%) as compared with their Canadian counterparts who are silent in this area.

As was the case for Question #2, the responses to Question #3 reveal a preponderance of Canadians seeking people management skills and experiential experience. The Japanese seek greater insights on the intricacies of the departmental activities. The Japanese responses exceed those of Canadians in specific knowledge, legal, and language. Fostering talent shows the great emphasis placed in developing subordinates. Learning about the department reflects the practice of job rotation (usually every three years) which aids the individual's experience. This leads to the situation where managers have to learn about the environment to which they have been assigned.

The results of the mapping process are consistent with a number of sources in the literature. Herzberg (2003) continually reaffirms the challenge in motivating employees being the interface between workers and supervisors. The acknowledgement by Canadian first-line managers of a desire for greater skill level in this area. The level of proficiency by Japanese managers may be due to the formal and consistent development of their management in this area. The training responses are very illustrative of the differences in management development philosophies and their impact on performance management. The emphasis on individuality and end-results can lead to overlooking the importance of the means to accomplish the ends. A greater emphasis on the means heightens the awareness of the need for greater understanding and insights in the execution of the means.

11.2 QUESTION #3 – A SUMMARY

A substantial group of Canadian and Japanese respondents, 24% and 18% respectively overtly indicated that their background was adequate for the first-line management position. Regarding job specific experience, the Canadians expressed the need for mentoring/OJT. This aspect of training did not appear in the Japanese data as it is considered within the *modus operandi* for Japanese corporations. For people management, the Canadians focused on personal skills whilst the Japanese concentrated on subordinates' needs as well as improving their understanding of their work. There was a difference in attitude between the Canadians and the Japanese in relation to the concern for 'global factors' including languages. The Japanese also showed a greater concern for the environment in which they operate.

The results are consistent with Questions #2 and #8 where the Canadians are task or person-oriented and the Japanese show a concern for the people for whom they are accountable and the environment in which they work. These responses reflect managerial practices of the two populations. The need from Canadians for people management skills clearly demonstrates the requirement for such training which also is acknowledged as lacking (McKinsey, 1999a).

Testing was done to determine if the training needs identified were related to types of goals selected. Correlation matrices were tabulated comparing Question #3 with Questions #2/#8 clusters. Except for the non-responsive cluster in Question #3 which showed a negative correlation, none exhibited any statistical significance. This would indicate that training needs are not dependent on the nature of goals but more a function of the job requirements and the previous level of development.

These results illustrate the importance in assessing the management process as a whole, as compared to the sum of the various parts which can be actuated independently of one another. In the case of training, it would seem that when corporations fail to train their employees in the area of people management skills, there is a totally different perspective as compared to those organisations who do. In the Canadian setting, where individuals are left to their own devices, the lack of training is felt and verbalised as a major need. In addition, the focus on the means or the ends is also reflected in the responses. As much as the goal may be verbalised as an end point to be reached, the awareness that the means are most important is also very much acknowledged.

CHAPTER 12

ENVIRONMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS

One never changes the condition which one proposes ultimately to effect; instead, one changes things presumed to lead to "it."
(Bowers *et al*, 1975)

12.0 PREAMBLE

Environmental characteristics relate to one of the elements of the Generic Performance Model. Four questions are examined to ascertain the respondent's view of the factors affecting performance. They are sequenced on a continuum, from job frustrations to making that job fantastic (Figure 12.1).

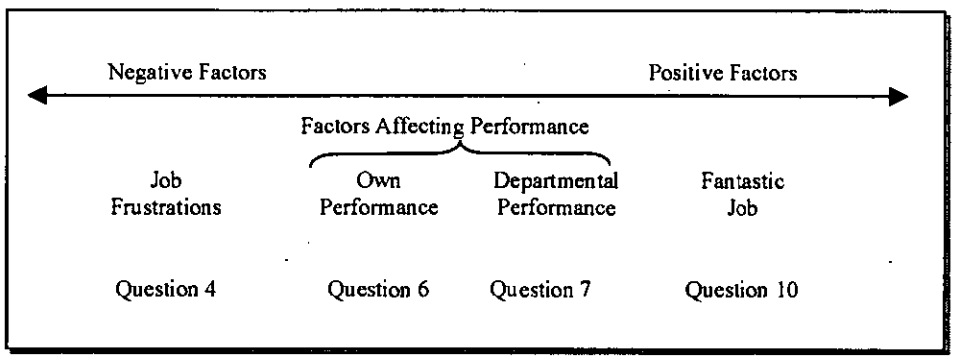


Figure 12.1 Related Questions to Environmental Characteristics

Question #4 "What Are Typical Frustrations to Your Job?" deals with problems and impediments encountered by respondents at work; it asks the respondent to identify the typical job frustrations. Question #6 "What Problems, If They Went Away, Would Greatly Improve Your Own Performance?" and Question #7 "What Problems If They Went Away, Would Improve Your Department's Performance?" delve into the problems issue, but from both the perspective of the individual and the department. Through these three questions, environmental factors, which detract from performance, can be

ascertained. Question #10 "What Would Make Your Job Fantastic?" represents a wish list as to what would make the job fantastic. The phrasing allows the individual to identify factors, whether positive or negative, which would provide a satisfying work experience. Each question is posed in such a way that it can be construed in a wide range of perspectives. However, the objective is not so much to determine the specifics of the respondent's work situation but to determine what the individual considers germane. The analysis for each of these questions is presented in the following sections.

12.1 QUESTION #4 "WHAT ARE TYPICAL FRUSTRATIONS TO YOUR JOB?"

This question specifically addresses the frustrations related to the current job. The onus is on the respondent to verbalise the factors that are a source of aggravation.

12.1.1 Categories Definitions and Tabulations for Job Frustrations

A total of 28 categories were developed from the responses (Table 12.1). The results are provided as a tabulation (Table 12.2) and graphically (Figure 12.2).

What Are Typical Frustrations To Your Job?

Nature of Work: Reference to nature of work being performed, such as repetitive, boring and demanding.
Time, Deadlines: Constraint or pressure due to time limitation.
Interdepartmental: Reference to difficulty encountered with other groups or departments within the company.
Adapting to New Conditions: Reluctance to adapt to new or current conditions in the organisation.
Management Communications/Decisions: Degree of disenchantment, frustration, or even animosity between the respondent and the hierarchy.
Corporate Policies/Practices: Rules and regulations set.
Equipment: Lack of, or problems with, existing equipment or hardware required to produce quantity or quality required.
Workload: Amount of work expected is of such magnitude that it is specifically mentioned.
Paperwork: Bureaucratic approach in the organisation.
No Authority: Lack of power to actually perform what is considered within the realm of position.
Competency/Quality of Personnel: Assessment by the first-line manager of direct subordinates who lack skills or knowledge.
Managing/Motivating Workers: Challenge to keep subordinates motivated or willing to apply their knowledge and skills.
Lack of Accomplishment: Sense of frustration related to the lack of demonstrable results.
Lack of Recognition: Lack of recognition for work well done.
Co-operation: Lack of co-operation without specifying individuals.
Communications: Desire for improved communication without identifying where the deficiencies lie.
Operating Problems: Issues of operational nature such as machine breakdown, shortages of raw materials, etc.
Interaction with Subordinates: Degree of dissatisfaction with communication, attitude and interaction with subordinates.
Lack of Resources: Includes any reference to lack of resources whether financial or in relation to personnel or plant/equipment.
Fire Fighting: Frustration of operating in a reactive mode.
Customers: Customers have a role to play in the individuals' frustration.
Employee Work Ethic: Lack of employee conscientiousness, absenteeism and work effort.
Union: Issues such as work rules and discipline which impede on effective management.
Other: Items of low count, not fitting any of the other categories.
External/Random Events: Such factors as the economy and competition beyond the confines of the organisation.
Nothing:
Pay: Reference to remuneration.
Human Relations: Factors related to interpersonal relations without identifying individuals, excluding boss, subordinates, customers and unions.

Table 12.1 Question #4: Glossary of Defined Categories for Job Frustrations

What Are Typical Frustrations To Your Job?

	For Referral	Canada		Japan		p
		#	%	#	%	
Nature of Work	A	11	4	9	3	.521
Time, Deadlines	B	43	14	9	3	.000*
Interdepartmental	C	20	6	17	6	.518
Adapting to New Conditions	D	8	3	3	1	.155
Management Decisions/Communication	E	48	15	64	23	.011*
Corporate Policies/Practices	F	22	7	17	6	.395
Equipment	G	13	4	0	0	.000*
Workload	H	25	8	28	10	.225
Paperwork	I	16	5	2	1	.001*
No Authority	J	16	5	10	4	.247
Competency/Quality of Personnel	K	13	4	8	3	.274
Managing/Motivating Workers	L	17	5	16	6	.498
Lack of Accomplishment	M	3	1	0	0	.149
Lack of Recognition	N	10	3	10	4	.479
Co-operation	O	13	4	0	0	.000*
Lack /Poor Communication	P	21	7	5	2	.003*
Operating Problems	Q	5	2	0	0	.041
Interaction with Subordinates	R	54	17	0	0	.000*
Lack of Resources	S	39	12	14	5	.001*
Fire Fighting	T	11	4	0	0	.001*
Customers	U	30	10	4	2	.000*
Employee Work Ethic	V	25	8	8	3	.005*
Union	W	14	5	0	0	.000*
Other	X	19	6	19	7	.412
Extemal/Random Events	Y	5	2	0	0	.041*
Nothing	Z	9	3	57	21	.000*
Pay	AA	0	0	7	3	.005*
Human Relations	BB	0	0	23	8	.000*

*p<.05

Table 12.2 Question #4: Tabulation of Responses for Job Frustrations

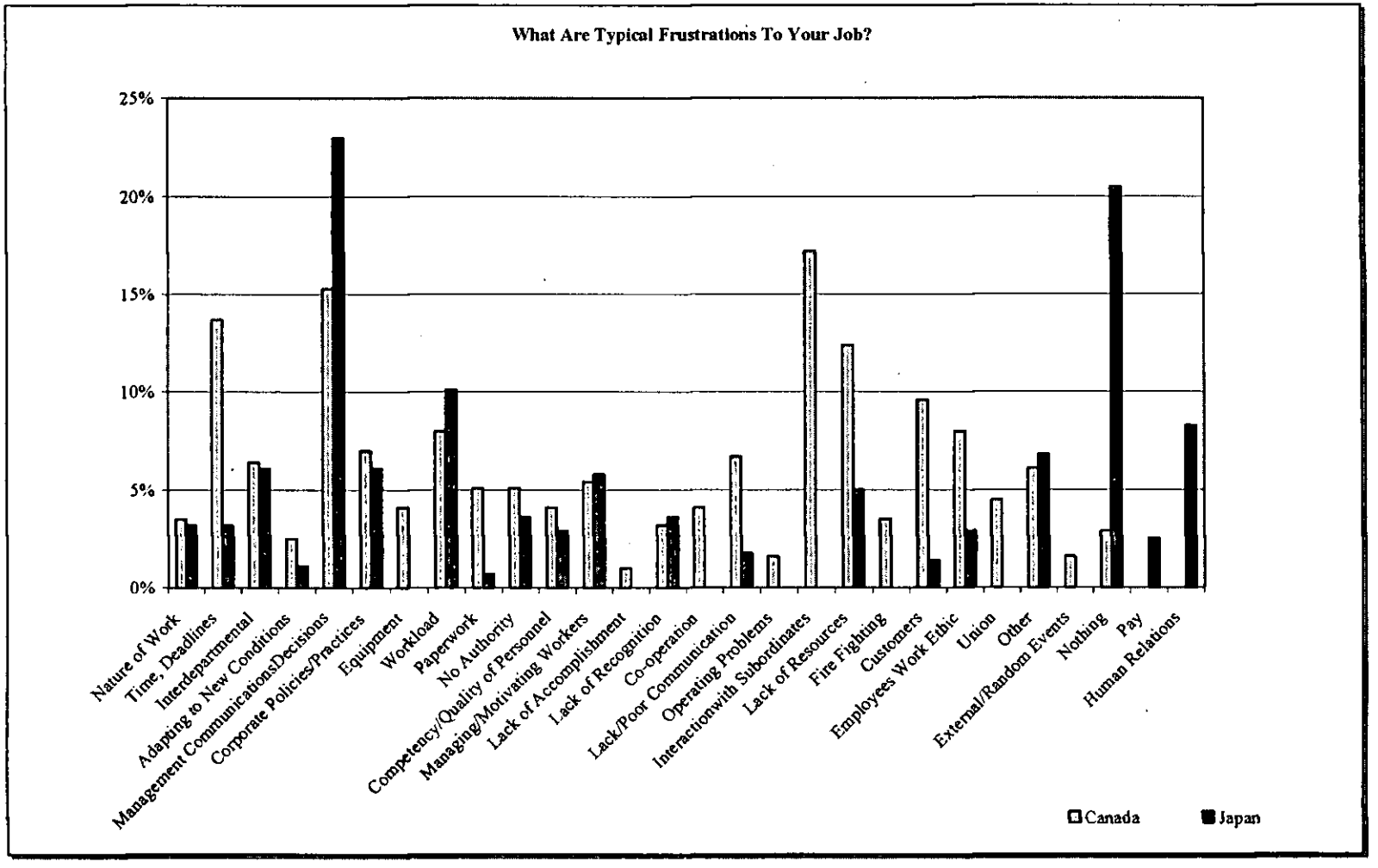


Figure 12.2 **Question #4: Graph of Responses for Job Frustrations**

The first reaction to the results presented is the difference in the number of answers collected between the Canadian and Japanese first-line managers. There were 510 mentions for the 314 Canadian questionnaires (1.6 items per questionnaire) compared to 330 mentions for the 278 Japanese (1.2 per questionnaire). Of the latter, 20% noted that they were either satisfied or had no frustrations compared to 3% for the Canadians. Looking at these statistics as well as the number of satisfied managers, it could be concluded that the Japanese managers are less frustrated than their counterparts, probably due to either the practice of consensus building, or better training, or that they exhibit a more stoic attitude about their work environment.

Except for a few categories, such as management decisions/communication and workload, the Canadian rate of response is much higher than that of the Japanese. Two categories (Management Decisions/Communication, Nothing) show a greater than 10% response rate for the Japanese compared to five categories (Time, Deadlines, Management Decisions/Communication, Interaction with Subordinates, Lack of Resources) for the Canadians. The largest single category for the Canadians is the interaction with subordinates at 17% against 0% for the Japanese whilst the largest category for the Japanese is the area of management communication/decisions at 23% versus 15% for the Canadians. Because of the large number of categories and their diversity, the mapping procedure had to be applied.

12.1.2 Mapping of Responses in Relation to Job Frustrations

From the initial tabulation, using the mapping procedure, there seems to be natural clusters around the various constituencies and practices of the organisation (Figure 12.3), with several groups of frustrations emerging. These include Work-Related,

Subordinates-Related, Policies & Procedures, Management, Interdepartmental, and Operational Issues. A number of categories (Adapting to New Conditions; Lack of Accomplishment; Customers; Other; External/Random Events; Pay and Human Relations) did not exhibit characteristics shared by others, and thus, are not part of any cluster.

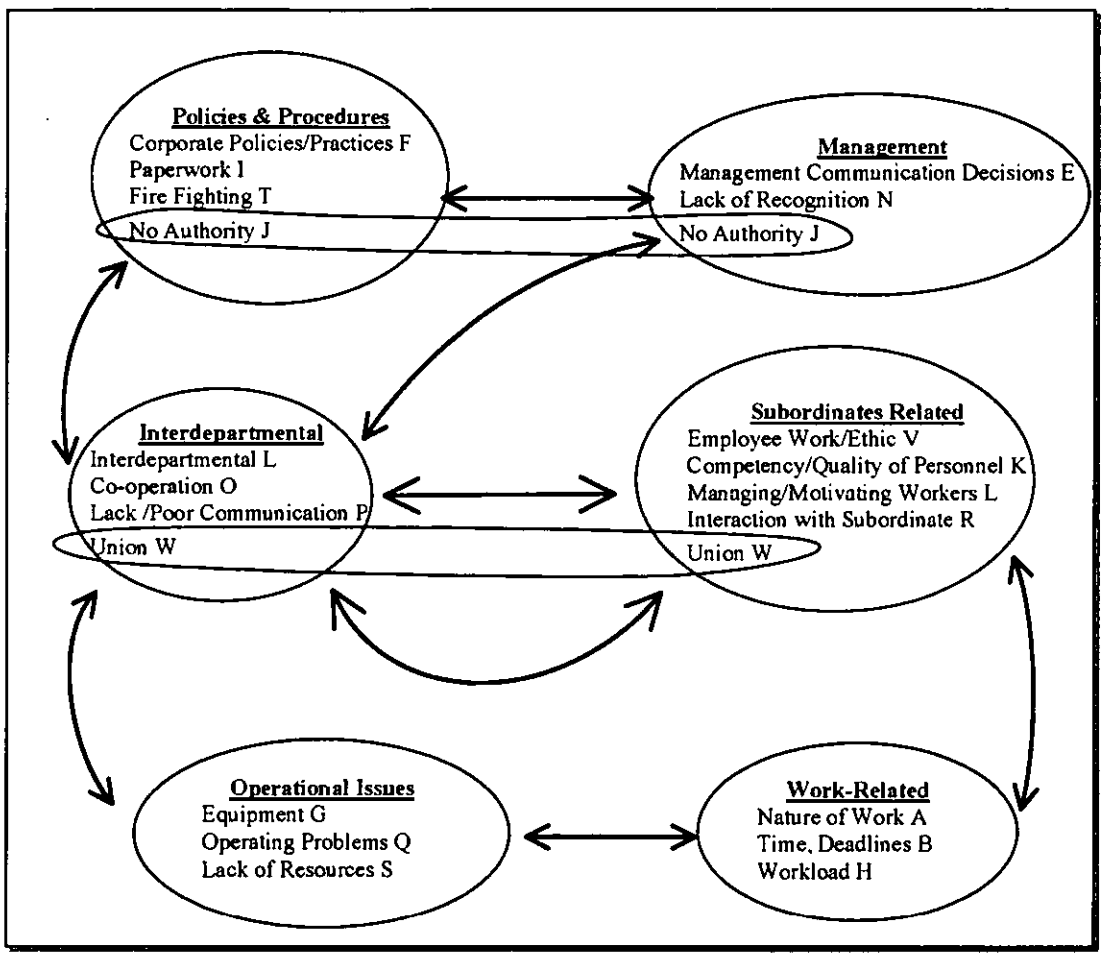


Figure 12.3 Question #4: Cognitive Mapping of Job Frustrations – Definitions

These categories can be compared to the dissatisfiers or Hygiene factors by Herzberg (1983). Table 12.3 provides the definition for each cluster and Table 12.4 shows the tabulated results which are illustrated in Figure 12.4.

What Are Typical Frustrations To Your Job?

Work-Related: Nature of work, workload, deadlines and time pressure.
Operational Issues: Problems related to the mechanics or resources required to perform the activities of the department.
Policies & Procedures: Corporate policies and practices, administrative processes and modes of operation. No authority is included in this cluster as well as in management.
Management: Interaction and frustration with the hierarchy, hence no authority.
Interdepartmental: Interaction between the department and other entities, including the union.
Subordinates-Related: Subordinates' attributes and union issues, the latter also in the interdepartmental cluster.

Table 12.3 Question #4: Cognitive Mapping of Job Frustrations - Definitions

What Are Typical Frustrations To Your Job?

		Canada		Japan		p
		#	%	#	%	
Work-Related						
Nature of Work	A	11	4	9	3	.521
Time, Deadlines	B	43	14	9	3	.000*
Workload	H	25	8	28	10	.225
Total		79	26	46	16	
Operations Issues						
Lack of Resources	S	39	12	14	5	.001*
Equipment	G	13	4	0	0	.000*
Operating Problems	Q	5	2	0	0	.041*
Total		57	18	14	5	
Policies & Procedures						
Corporate Policies/Practices	F	22	7	17	6	.395
Paperwork	I	16	5	2	1	.001*
Fire Fighting	T	11	4	0	0	.001*
No Authority	J	16	5	10	4	.247
Total		65	21	29	10	
Management						
Bureaucracy/No Authority	J	16	5	10	4	.247
Management/Communications Decisions	E	48	15	64	23	.011*
Lack of Recognition	N	10	3	10	4	.479
Total		74	24	84	30	
Interdepartmental						
Interdepartmental	C	20	6	17	6	.518
Co-operation	O	13	4	0	0	.000*
Lack/Poor Communication	P	21	7	5	2	.003*
Union	W	14	4	0	0	.000*
Total		68	22	22	8	
Subordinates Related						
Competency/Quality Personnel	K	13	4	8	3	.274
Managing/Motivating Workers	L	17	5	16	6	.498
Union	W	14	4	0	0	.000*
Interaction with Subordinates	R	54	17	23	8	.000*
Employee Work Ethic	V	25	8	8	3	.005*
Total		123	39	55	20	

***p<.05**

Table 12.4 Question #4: Frequency Distribution of Job Frustrations by Cluster

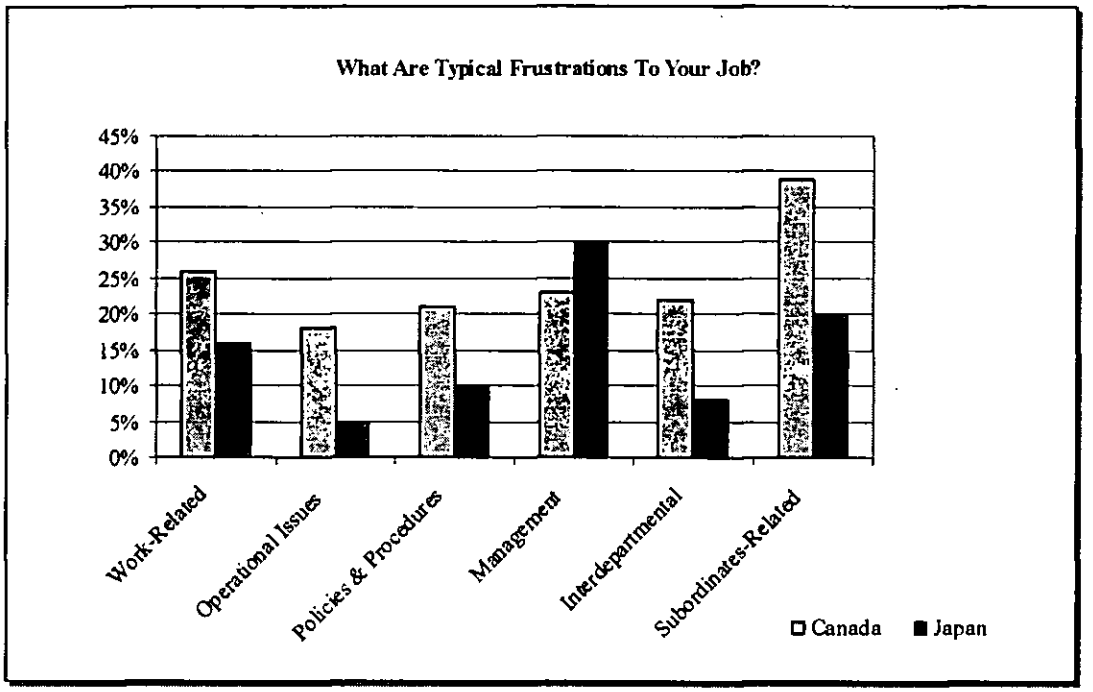


Figure 12.4 Question #4: Graph of Job Frustrations By Cluster

The mapping procedure clearly illustrates two important features. Each of the two populations has one cluster which stands above the others. For the Canadians, it is the subordinates-related issues at 30%, compared with the average of 22% for the other clusters; the Japanese identify management issues at 30% compared with their average of 12% for the other clusters. In all but one cluster (Management), the Canadians show a higher rate of frustration.

What Are Typical Frustrations To Your Job?

	Canada				Japan			
	# Mult.	# Sing.	% Mult.	% Sing.	# Mult.	# Sing.	% Mult.	% Sing.
Work-Related	79	70	25	22	46	43	16	16
Operational Issues	57	54	18	17	14	14	5	5
Policies & Procedures	65	61	21	19	29	29	10	10
Management	74	63	23	20	84	79	30	28
Interdepartmental	68	62	22	20	22	22	8	8
Subordinates'-Related	123	107	39	34	55	28	20	10

Table 12.5 Question #4: Comparison Multiple and Single Responses by Mapping Cluster for Job Frustration

As for previous questions, the comparison of percentages calculated on the number of questionnaires as compared to the number of responses shows little difference, and does not alter the overall conclusions (Table 12.5).

12.1.3 Overview of Question #4

The question did not explore any specific area in particular, and, thus, it is interesting to note that all responses seem directly related to the immediate work environment indicating that for the two samples, first-line managers are very much focused on operational concerns.

In every category, the Canadian managers show a greater level of frustration except for the relationship with management and the decision making process. In this area, the Japanese express more frustration at 30% against the Canadians' 24%. Clearly the Japanese first-line managers recognise this issue as endemic within their system. While the *ringi* system of consultation and approval has advantages, it also displays disadvantages.

The difference might be due to the greater effort expended by the Japanese organisations' management process to communicate such as shift start-up meetings and weekly production meetings, *Kaizen* (continuous improvement) and quality circles. Office layout (Mestre *et al*, 2000) and proximity in the work area could also explain the lower level of frustration on the part of Japanese managers.

The Canadian respondents show a pronounced degree of frustration in the broad areas of human resources management. When combining categories which are subordinates-specific with others that are either non-specific or broad in nature but also related to interpersonal skills, the difference between the two populations is self-evident. These factors are critical in interpreting how management practices affect the responses of the first-line managers.

		Canada		Japan	
		#	%	#	%
Co-operation	N	13	4	0	0
Communication	P	21	7	5	2
Union	W	14	5	0	0
Interaction with Subordinates	Q	54	17	0	0
Human Relations	BB	0	0	23	8
Employees Work Ethics	V	25	8	8	3
		127	41	36	13

The results clearly illustrate the challenge of Canadian managers in the area of 'people management'. They also reinforce the findings from the responses to Question #3. which identify the need for 'people management skills'. The implications are, according to the various models discussed in Chapter 3, that a wide range of variables must be considered which relate to conditions existing in the workplace.

12.2 QUESTION #6 "If YOU HAD A MAGIC WAND - WHAT ARE PROBLEMS THAT IF THEY WENT AWAY, WOULD GREATLY IMPROVE YOUR OWN PERFORMANCE?"

This question deals with the environmental characteristics which relate specifically to the first-line managers' own performance unlike Question #4 which was more broad-based and Question #7 which deals with departmental performance. It does not attempt to measure the importance, presence or lack of certain factors. To do so would have required a more direct approach, listing all of the elements identified in the environmental factors of the universal model; and then asking the respondents to evaluate each of them using a scale. Such further investigation would be too extensive in the context of this study.

12.2.1 Categories Definitions and Tabulations for Problems to Own Performance

A total of 29 topical categories emanated, some unique to the Canadians and some to the Japanese. Table 12.6 contains the definitions used to classify the responses. Table 12.7 provides the tabulation of the results, illustrated in Figure 12.5.

If You Had a Magic Wand, What Are Problems That If They Went Away, Would Greatly Improve Your Own Performance?

Bureaucracy: Excessive, complicated or non-responsive official routines, forms and procedures.
Politics: Manoeuvring for power and decisions outcomes.
Goals/Policies: Perceived corporate practices and directives.
Boss's Relationship: Reference to inadequate management relationship.
Authority/Responsibility: Lack of responsibility or authority to make decisions.
Resistance to Change: Need for change combined or conflicting with unwillingness to change.
Teamwork/Conflict: Need to work as a team.
Communication: Desire for improved communication without indicating difficulties with individuals or nature of communication.
Corporate Performance: Overall results which fall short of expectations.
Time Management: Need for better utilisation of their time.
No Time: Lack of freedom and time availability.
Work Load: Heavy work load and long hours required for the position.
Planning Lead time: Poor scheduling creating production problems.
Interruptions: Frustration due to continual interruptions.
Support System: Software, scheduling and other functions required to accomplish work.
Additional Resources: Inadequate or lack of financial, personnel or hardware to accomplish work.
Increased Efficiency: Degree of dissatisfaction in the area of efficiency.
Quality of Subordinates: Qualifications and skills of subordinates are inadequate for positions involved.
Staff Problems/Poor Attitude: Focus on worker attitudes.
Subordinates Relationship: Nature or quality of interaction between manager and subordinates.
Union: Issues such as labour climate, work rules and general nature of interaction with unions.
Working Environment: Reference to physical facilities.
Competition: Competitors in the market place as a source of problems.
Customer Problems: Expectations and behaviour of customers as areas of difficulty.
None:
Other:
Blank:
Operational Problems: Quality of work as a source of problems.
Visibility/Recognition: Lack of recognition and appreciation for work done.

Table 12.6 Question #6: Glossary of Defined Categories for Problems to Own Performance

If You Had a Magic Wand, What Are Problems That If They Went Away, Would Greatly Improve Your Own Performance?

	For Referral	Canada		Japan		p
		#	%	#	%	
Bureaucracy	A	24	8	23	8	.777
Politics	B	8	3	10	3	.458
Goals/Policies	C	16	5	22	7	.163
Boss's Relationship	D	28	9	22	7	.661
Authority/Responsibility	E	21	7	39	12	.003*
Resistance to Change	F	4	1	0	0	.059
Teamwork/Conflict	G	23	7	9	3	.028*
Communication	H	14	5	9	3	.443
Corporate Performance	I	0	0	4	1	.033
Operational Problems	J	7	2	4	1	.477
Visibility/Recognition	K	0	0	6	2	.009*
Time Management	L	5	2	4	1	.879
No Time	M	25	8	20	6	.725
Work Load	N	15	5	20	6	.213
Planning Lead Time	O	8	3	0	0	.007*
Interruptions	P	4	1	4	1	.862
Support System	Q	30	10	29	9	.722
Additional Resources	R	40	13	18	6	.011*
Increased Efficiency	S	3	1	8	3	.084
Quality of Subordinates	T	20	6	19	6	.820
Staff Problems/Poor Attitudes	U	38	12	12	4	.001*
Subordinates Relationship	V	4	1	5	2	.603
Union	W	13	4	0	0	.001*
Working Environment	X	5	2	0	0	.035
Competition	Y	4	1	0	0	.059
Customer Problems	Z	18	6	3	1	.002*
None	AA	14	5	9	3	.443
Other	BB	18	6	18	6	.706
Blank	CC	0	0	22	7	.000*

$p < .05$

Table 12.7 Question #6: Tabulation of Responses for Problems to Own Performance

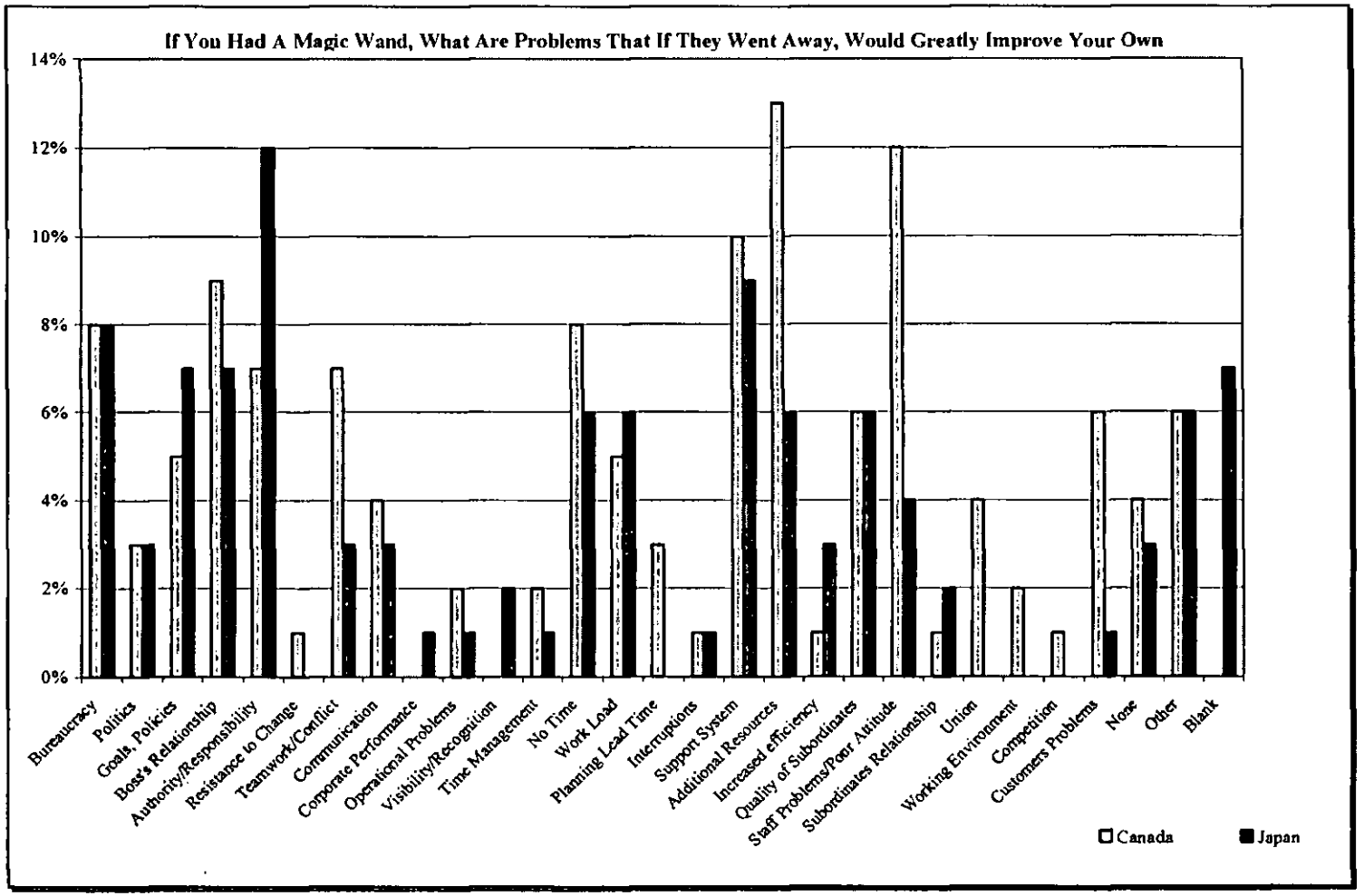


Figure 12.5 <u>Question #6: Graph of Responses for Problems to Own Performance</u>

Eight categories proved to be significantly different for the two populations (Authority/Responsibility, Teamwork/Conflict, Visibility/Recognition, Planning Lead Time, Additional Resources, Staff Problems/Poor Attitude, Union and Customer Problems). As can be seen, the Canadians identify as their major needs those associated with additional resources (13%) and staff problems/poor attitude (12%), whilst the Japanese major need is the area of authority/responsibility (12%). As in previous questions, the mapping process is again required as many of the categories share common features.

While the differences between the two populations could be interpreted as Canadians being more prone to voice openly their frustrations and the Japanese towing the party line, such an interpretation, while probably true, understates the real insights. The recurring theme of Canadians is indicative of having a need in the area of people management. The differences in management processes (Mestre & Sutherland, 1995) can be conducive to either enhance the existing conditions as a matter of course, or frustration.

12.2.2 Mapping of Responses in Relation to Problems of Own Performance

With the mapping process, the 29 categories have been translated into eight distinct clusters, presented in Figure 12.6. Each cluster is defined (Table 12.8) and the results are tabulated (Table 12.9). Table 12.10 compares the results of single and multiple counts for each cluster. As in previous comparisons, the differences are so small and do not affect the conclusions.

A number of categories deal with the managerial process in reaching decisions: bureaucracy, politics, goals/policies, and resistance to change. They are an indication of the perceived practices. Relating to Managerial interface, three elements, namely boss's relationship, authority/responsibility and visibility/recognition reflect the quality of interaction and decision making such as a lack of empowerment. These are a manifestation of the work climate within the corporation, and in some ways, are an indication of managerial dissonance. A few categories fit on the personal aspects of the position and the time dimension where time demands appertain to time management, workload and, indeed, no time. Investigating the issue of subordinates, this would embrace attitude, quality/skill level, productivity as well as relationship with individuals and, at times, the union. The work climate cluster composed of lead time, support systems, work environment, operational problems and lack of resources combines responses which, while beyond the control of the first-line manager, are acknowledged as affecting individual performance.

The None category would lead one to assume general satisfaction with the existing situation, although it would be hard to imagine a situation without problems. It could be presumed that the blank responses can be an indication that none was worth mentioning.

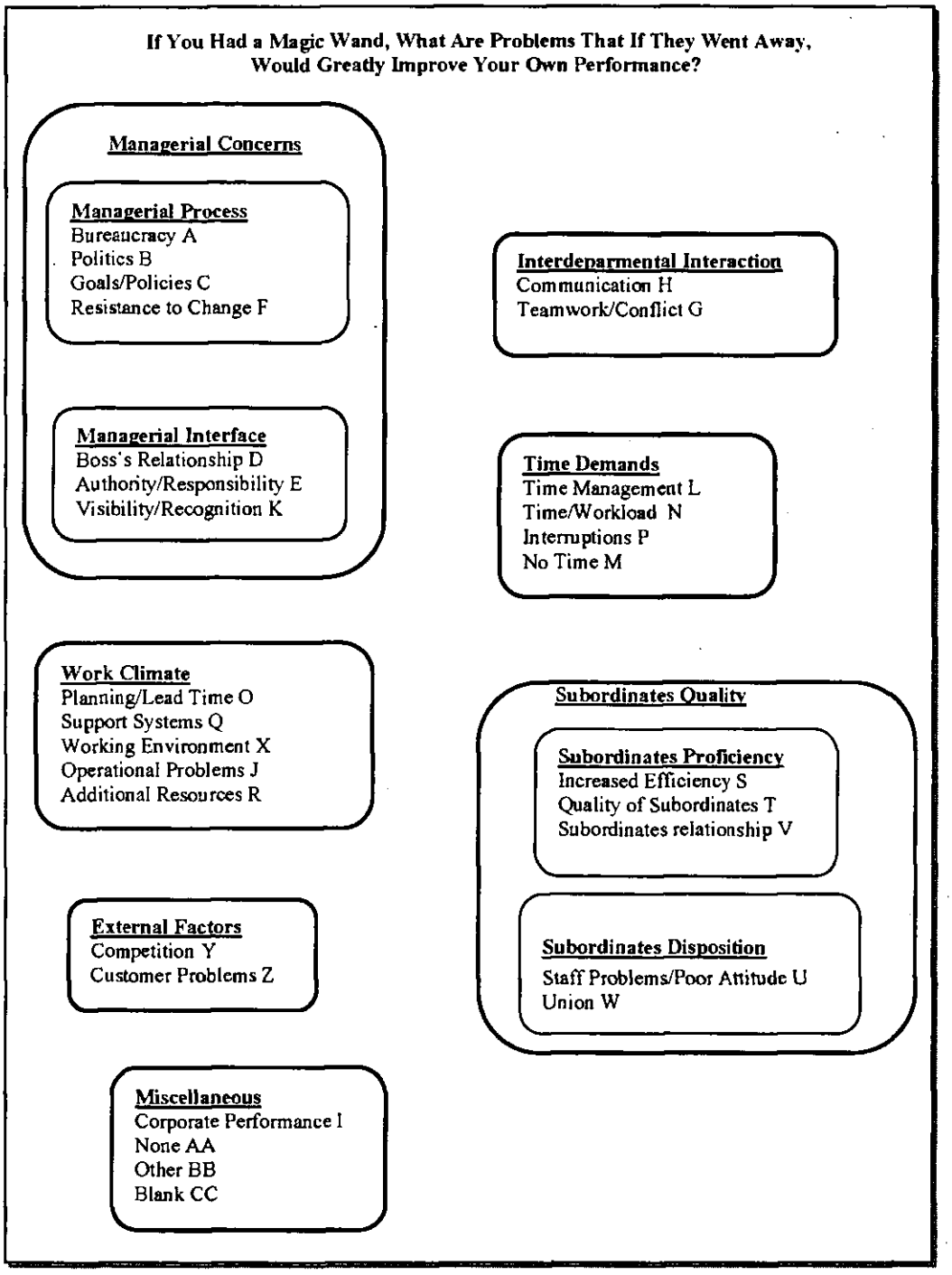


Figure 12.6 Question #6: Cognitive Mapping for Problems to Own Performance

If You Had a Magic Wand, What Are Problems That If They Went Away, Would Greatly Improve Your Own Performance?

Management Concerns: Comprising two clusters namely (a) Management Process and (b) Managerial Interface constituting of categories related to managerial practices.
MANAGERIAL PROCESS – The way decisions are reached, including bureaucracy, politics, goals/policies and resistance to change.
MANAGERIAL INTERFACE – Quality of interpersonal relationships, such as boss's relationship, authority/responsibility and visibility/recognition.
Interdepartmental Interaction: Quality of interaction between various groups, including communication and teamwork/conflict.
Time Demands: References to time pressures, such as time management, workload and interruptions.
Work Climate: References to factors affecting operations, such as lead time/planning, support systems, working environment, operational problems and the need for additional resources.
Subordinates Quality: Comprising two elements related to subordinates namely
(a) SUBORDINATES PROFICIENCY which includes efficiency, staff quality and relationship and
(b) SUBORDINATES DISPOSITION which appertains to attitude, motivation and the effect of a union affecting work relationship.
External Factors: Factors outside of the organisation, related to competition and customers.
Miscellaneous: All other categories judged as not readily fitting in any of the above clusters.

Table 12.8 Question #6: Cognitive Mapping for Problems to Own Performance - Definitions

If You Had a Magic Wand, What Are Problems That If They Went Away, Would Greatly Improve Your Own Performance?

		Canada		Japan	
		#	%	#	%
Management Concerns					
MANAGERIAL PROCESS					
Bureaucracy	A	24	8	23	8
Politics	B	8	3	10	3
Goals/Policies	C	16	5	22	7
Resistance to Change	F	4	1	0	0
Sub-Total		52	16	55	20
MANAGERIAL INTERFACE					
Boss's Relationship	D	28	9	22	8
Authority/Responsibility	E	21	7	39	14
Visibility/Recognition	K	0	0	6	2
Sub-Total		49	16	67	24
Total		101	32	122	44
Interdepartmental Interaction					
Communication	H	14	5	9	3
Teamwork/Conflict	G	23	7	9	3
Total		37	12	18	6
Time Demands					
Time Management	L	5	2	4	1
Workload	N	40	13	40	13
No Time	M				
Interruptions	P	4	1	4	1
Total		49	16	48	17
Work Climate					
Planning/Lead Time	O	8	3	6	2
Support System	Q	30	10	29	10
Working Environment	X	5	2	0	0
Operational Problems	J	7	2	4	1
Additional Resources	R	40	13	18	6
Total		90	29	57	21
Subordinates Quality					
SUBORDINATES PROFICIENCY					
Increased Efficiency	S	3	1	8	2
Quality of Subordinates	T	20	6	29	6
Subordinates Relationship	V	4	1	5	2
Sub-Total		27	9	42	15
SUBORDINATES MOTIVATION					
Staff Problems/Poor Attitude	U	38	12	12	4
Union	W	13	4	0	0
Sub-Total		51	16	12	4
Total		78	25	54	19
External Factors					
Competition	Y	4	1	0	0
Customer Problems	Z	18	6	3	1
Total		22	7	3	1
Miscelleneous					
Corporate Performance	I	0	0	4	1
None	AA	14	5	9	3
Other	BB	18	6	18	6
Blank	CC	0	0	22	7
Total		32	10	53	19

Table 12.9 Question #6: Frequency Distribution of Problems to Own Performance by Cluster

If You Had a Magic Wand, What Are Problems That If They Went Away, Would Greatly Improve Your Own Performance?

	Canada				Japan			
	# Mult.	# Sing.	% Mult.	% Sing.	# Mult.	# Sing.	% Mult.	% Sing.
Managerial Process	52	50	17	16	55	54	20	19
Managerial Interface	49	48	16	15	67	63	21	20
Interdepartmental Interactions	37	36	12	12	18	18	7	7
Time Demands	49	46	16	15	48	48	17	17
Work Climate	90	86	29	27	57	51	21	18
Subordinates Quality	27	27	9	9	42	30	15	11
Subordinates Motivation	51	51	16	16	12	12	4	4
External Factors	22	21	7	7	3	3	1	1

Table 12.10 Question #6: Comparison of Multiple and Single Responses by Mapping Cluster for Problems to Own Performance

12.2.3 Overview for Question #6

When using individual response categories, the results show general agreement in four areas: (a) Bureaucracy and Boss's Relationship; (b) Time Management and Interruptions; (c) Need for Support System; (d) Quality of Subordinates. It is not surprising that there would be agreement in these areas as the positions are the same in the two populations.

However, differences are very much in predictable areas based upon the findings from previous questions. For example, the number of mentions for authority/responsibility is greater for the Japanese whilst the Canadians highlight to a greater extent teamwork/conflict, staff problems and attitude as well as relationship with the union. Such responses are consistent with the results produced for Questions #2, #8, #3 and #4; where, the need for training in the management of subordinates and the emphasis on the end over the means were identified. The results of the mapping process show similar results. An area where the Japanese respondents focus, not previously noted, is the

quality of subordinates. Given their practice of keeping poor performers on the payroll, it is not surprising to see such a disparity between Canadian and Japanese responses.

12.3 QUESTION #7 "IF YOU HAD A MAGIC WAND, WHAT ARE THE PROBLEMS, THAT IF THEY WENT AWAY, WOULD GREATLY IMPROVE YOUR DEPARTMENT'S PERFORMANCE?"

As the previous questions delved into the elements affecting the individual performance of first-line managers, this question relates to the department's performance. Its objective is to determine different factors that influence the manager's and the department's performance.

12.3.1 Categories, Definitions and Tabulations for Problems Affecting Departmental Performance

A total of 32 categories were developed from the responses. Table 12.11 provides their definitions and Table 12.12 provides the frequency response for each category as a percent of the number of responses. Eleven proved to have significant differences between the two populations. Leading the top three categories for the Canadians was department morale followed by plant/equipment needs and planning. The top category for the Japanese was the need for trained subordinates followed by planning and spaces left blank. If 'blank, don't know, and none' responses are combined, both the Canadian and Japanese data were at the 17% mark, or the largest category for both populations. As in previous questions, the human resource management remains one of the primary concerns of Canadians. Because of the large number of categories, the mapping process yielded clusters for further analysis and Figure 12.7 presents these graphically.

If You Had A Magic Wand, What Are The Problems That If They Went Away, Would Greatly Improve Your Department's Performance?

Staffing Levels: Need for additional personnel.
Plant/Equipment Resources: Need for additional resources in this area to meet expectations.
Budget/Funds: Need for financial resources only.
Production Planning/Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP): Need for better production planning and scheduling.
Re-engineer the Organisation: Need for redesigning the organisation to achieve desired level of performance.
Authority/Roles: Lack of authority to make decisions in the area of direct responsibility.
Bureaucracy: Frustration with paperwork, slowness in response and non-responsive behaviour.
Planning: Lack of forethought and direction.
Interface/Better Boss Relations: Reference to frustration or need of improved relations with superiors.
Increase Knowledge: Need for greater skills and knowledge.
Department Morale/Retain Employees: Need to improve morale of subordinates with possible reference to employee retention.
Trained Subordinates: Lack of skills and need for trained employees.
Intradepartmental Issues: Reference to departmental communication, teamwork and other issues related to departmental changes.
Subordinates Performance: Dissatisfaction regarding subordinates' level of performance.
Poor Performers: Poor performance not attributed to subordinates but in general.
Interdepartmental Barriers/Problems: Lack of co-operation, operational and interdepartmental communication problems outside of the realm of supervision of the manager.
Union: Labour union as a source of impediments.
Quality: Reference to quality issues, either in materials received or goods produced.
Customers: Issues regarding customers' dissatisfaction, demands or expectations.
External Factors: Factors external to the organisation, such as state of the economy or competition.
Work Environment/Facilities: Physical work surroundings such as lighting and noise making the work area less than desirable.
Communication: In general, it is an issue.
Recognition: Lack of acknowledgement of good performance.
Interpersonal Conflict: Some animosity or conflict in the workplace.
Time Management: Time pressures and lack of control on how time is spent.
Work Load: Excessive amount to work expected to be achieved.
Nature of Work: All aspects of work perceived as a waste of time such as meetings and repetitive tasks.
Communication with Subordinates: Explicit difficulty in interacting with subordinates.

Table 12.11 Question #7: Glossary of Defined Categories for Problems of Departmental Performance

If You Had A Magic Wand, What Are The Problems That If They Went Away, Would Greatly Improve Your Department's Performance?

	For Referral	Canada		Japan		p
		#	%	#	%	
Staffing Levels	A	19	6	18	7	.832
Plant/Equipment Resources	B	35	11	1	0	.000*
Budget/Funds	C	8	3	5	2	.535
Production Planning/ERP	D	35	11	32	12	.889
Reengineer the Organisation	E	11	4	17	6	.135
Authority/Roles	F	10	3	20	7	.026*
Bureaucracy	G	19	6	12	4	.344
Planning	H	10	3	11	4	.612
Interface/Better Boss Relations	I	23	7	19	7	.817
Increase Knowledge	J	1	0	1	0	.931
Department Morale/Retain Employees	K	48	15	16	6	.000*
Nature of Work	L	0	0	8	3	.002*
Trained Subordinates	M	23	7	41	15	.004*
Communications with Subordinates	N	0	0	6	2	.009*
Intradepartmental Issues	O	7	2	8	3	.616
Subordinates Performance	P	3	1	11	4	.016*
Poor Performers	Q	10	3	2	2	.034*
Interdepartmental Barriers/Problems	R	6	2	9	3	.305
Union	S	3	1	0	0	.102
Quality	T	4	1	6	2	.405
Customers	U	9	3	1	0	.018*
External Factors	V	8	3	0	0	.007*
Work Load	W	0	0	7	3	.005*
Work environment/Facilities	X	3	1	6	2	.223
Communication	Y	8	3	6	2	.756
Recognition	Z	3	1	4	2	.587
None	AA	27	7	13	5	.058
Blank	BB	29	9	32	12	.363
Don't Know	CC	4	1	0	0	.059
Other	DD	13	4	9	3	.562
Interpersonal Conflict	EE	4	1	1	0	.225
Time Management	FF	10	3	4	1	.163

*p <.05

Table 12.12 Question #7: Tabulation of Responses for Problems of Departmental Performance

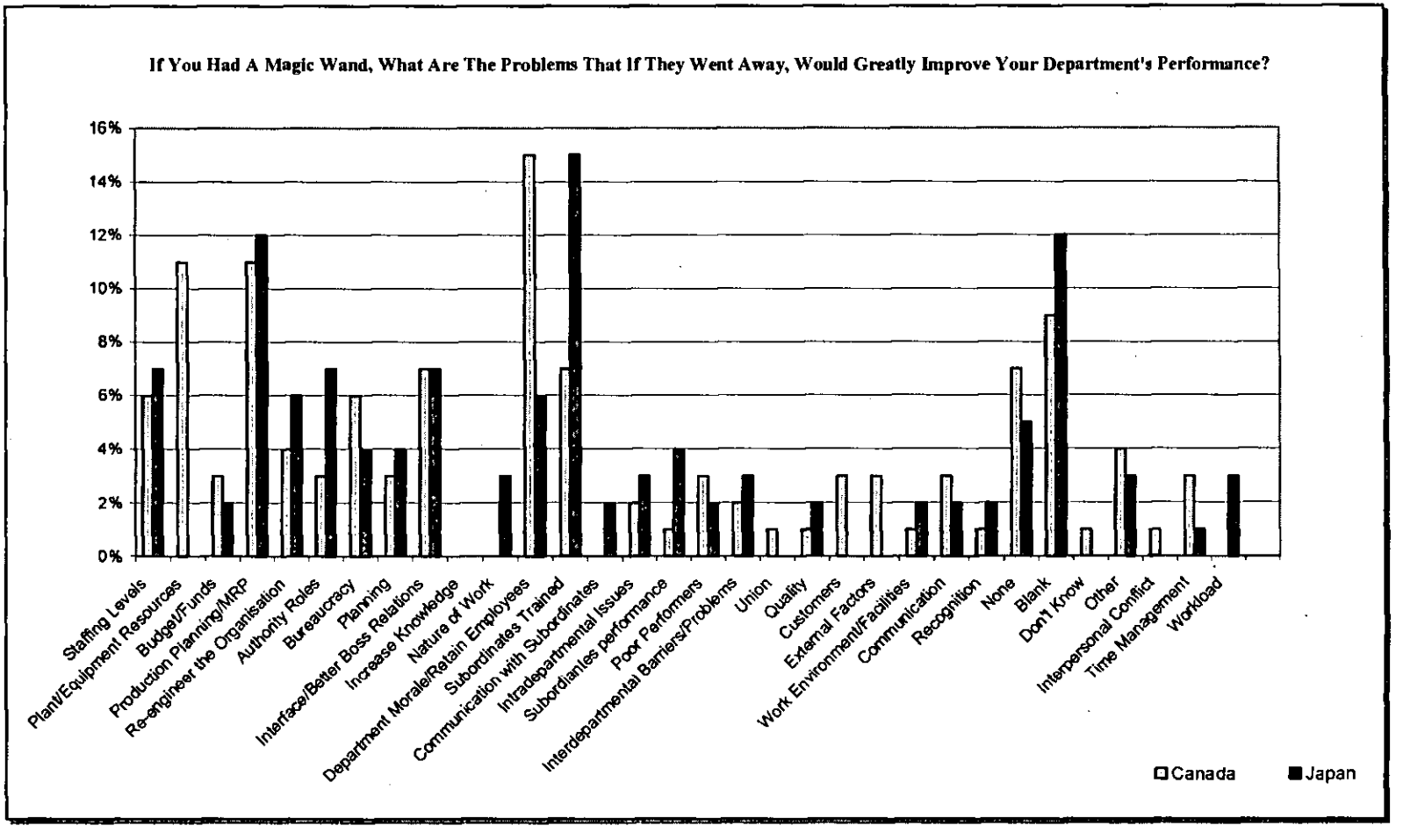


Figure 12.7 Question #7: Graph of Responses for Problems of Departmental Performance

12.3.2 Mapping of Responses in Relation to Problems of Departmental Performance

Because of the breadth of areas that are encompassed by the various categories, a total of nine clusters emerge from the mapping process (Figure 12.8). Such a number of clusters should not be surprising. Garvin & Cizik (1998) describe a 3x3 matrix to describe the various processes such as work and behavioural. Their characterisation applies to the organisation as a whole. This research reflects not only the organisational concerns of the respondents, but also every entity within it such as the respondents themselves, their subordinates, their superiors as well as considerations outside the organisation such as customers and other external factors. The definitions of the clusters are given in Table 12.13.

If You Had A Magic Wand, What Are The Problems That If They Went Away, Would Greatly Improve Your Department's Performance?

Resource-Related: Need for additional resources or funding in the form of staffing levels, plant and equipment, budget/funds and Production Planning/ERP systems and/or computers.
Organisational Management: Factors such as: (a) organisational design considerations, and (b) management process.
ORGANISATIONAL DESIGN – Need to re-engineer in order to be more effective in making decisions, awareness of authority/roles.
MANAGEMENT PROCESS – Reference to interaction with superiors, taking into account bureaucracy, boss interface, recognition and planning or the lack of these elements.
Departmental Concerns: Factors affecting departmental effectiveness (a) department work climate and (b) quality of subordinates.
DEPARTMENTAL WORK CLIMATE – References to departmental morale, intra-departmental issues and communication with subordinates – all reflecting the human interaction within the department.
QUALITY OF SUBORDINATES – Subordinates' skills and training as well as performance levels specifically highlighting poor performance.
Work Climate: Broader issues, external to the department, including union, interpersonal conflict, inter-departmental barriers and communication.
Operational Issues: Physical limitations within the work environment impeding on the ability to meet quality requirements.
Outward Considerations: Factors external to the organisation, such as the economy and customer expectations.
Personal Effectiveness: (a) Personal skills to improve personal knowledge and (b) Personal work-related categories alluding to work pressures such as load, nature and time.
General/Non-Responses: Encompassing all other categories: none, other, blank and don't know.

Table 12.13 Question #7: Cognitive Mapping of Problems of Departmental Performance-Definitions

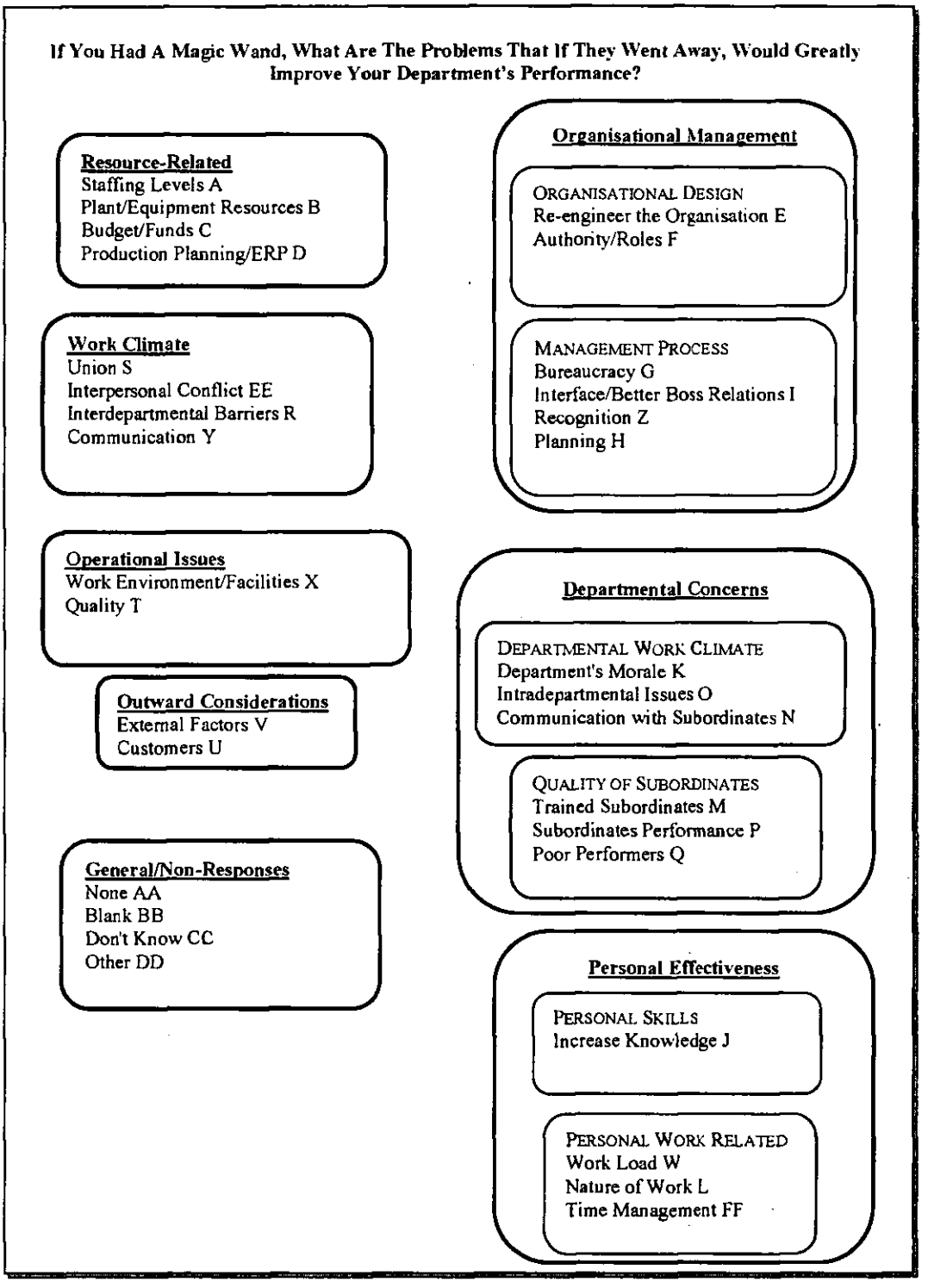


Figure 12.8 Question #7: Cognitive Mapping of Problems of Departmental Performance

One cluster is resource related, revealing the need for increasing staffing, plant/equipment levels, properly budgeted for and funded. Another type of resource is the availability of data and systems such as Production Planning and/or enterprise resource planning (ERP). This category is the largest in this cluster.

Another group of concerns relates to Organisational Management which is composed of two sub-clusters, one dealing with Organisational Design which relates to the respondents' prerogative to make decisions, lines of authority, responsibility or approval levels, and the other with Management Process. This sub-cluster is distinct as it reflects the quality of interaction between the hierarchy and the boss with first-line managers in such areas as planning, bureaucracy and recognition.

The cluster with the largest number of responses deals with Departmental Concerns. It is also composed of two sub-clusters, one dealing with Departmental Work Climate and the other with the Quality of the Subordinates.

The work climate cluster reflects issues of a nature broader than the scope of the department such as union, interpersonal conflict, interdepartmental barriers and communications. Any response, not department specific, is perceived as a general or organisation-wide challenge; it is included in this cluster which addresses such issues. The Operational Issues cluster has also a non-departmental focus but addresses issues on the broader scale such as work environment, facilities and quality.

Another cluster imparts the challenges encountered by the first-line managers: work load, nature of the work and time management. The responses are neither personal in

nature nor organisational in terms of structure of decision process. These work-related factors could be combined with personal skills; this is because they all relate to the respondents' ability to perform in their current position that is personal effectiveness.

Two other clusters, of a general nature, deal with Outward Considerations such as external factors and customers, and General/Non-responses. The actual data generated to match the mapping process clusters is presented in Table 12.14. It reveals the pulse of the departments.

If You Had A Magic Wand, What Are The Problems That If They Went Away, Would Greatly Improve Your Department's Performance?

		Canada		Japan	
		#	%	#	%
Resource-Related					
Staffing Levels	A	19	6	18	7
Plant & Equipment	B	35	11	1	0
Budget/Funds	C	8	3	5	2
Production Planning/ERP	D	35	11	32	12
Total		97	31	56	21
Organisational Management					
ORGANISATIONAL DESIGN					
Re-engineer	E	11	4	17	6
Authority/Roles	F	10	3	20	7
Sub-Total		21	7	37	13
MANAGEMENT PROCESS					
Bureaucracy	G	19	6	12	4
Boss Interface	I	23	7	19	7
Recognition	E	3	1	4	1
Planning	H	10	3	11	4
Sub-Total		55	18	46	16
Total		76	25	83	29
Departmental Concerns					
DEPARTMENTAL WORK CLIMATE					
Department's Morale	K	48	15	16	6
Intradepartmental Team Work	O	7	2	8	3
Communication with Subordinates	N	0	0	6	2
Sub-Total		55	17	30	11
QUALITY OF SUBORDINATES					
Trained Subordinates	M	23	7	41	15
Subordinates Performance	P	3	1	11	4
Poor Performers	Q	10	3	2	1
Sub-Total		36	11	54	20
Total		91	28	84	31
Work Climate					
Union	S	3	1	0	0
Interpersonal Conflict	EE	4	1	1	0
Interdeptartmental Barriers	R	6	2	9	3
Communication	Y	8	3	6	2
Total		21	7	16	5
Personal Effectiveness					
Increase Knowledge	J	1	0	1	0
Work-Related					
Work Load	W	0	0	7	3
Nature of Work	L	0	0	8	3
Time Management	FF	10	3	4	1
Total		10	3	19	7

Continued on next page

Operational Issues					
Work Environment/Facilities	X	3	1	6	2
Quality	T	4	1	6	2
Total		7	2	12	4
Outward Considerations					
External Factors	V	8	3	0	0
Customers	U	9	3	1	0
Total		17	6	1	0
General/Non-Responses					
None	AA	27	9	13	5
Other	BB	29	9	32	12
Blank	CC	4	1	0	0
Other	DD	13	4	9	3
Total		73	23	54	19

Table 12.14 Question #7: Frequency Distribution of Problems of Departmental Performance By Cluster

Percentages were also calculated on the basis of frequency of all mentions divided by the number of questionnaires. As clusters include several categories, the frequency can be calculated on the number of questionnaires per cluster. The conclusions are not affected by this method in the calculation of the percentages. These are featured in Table 12.15.

If You Had A Magic Wand, What Are The Problems That If They Went Away, Would Greatly Improve Your Department's Performance?

	Canada				Japan			
	# Mult.	# Sing.	% Mult.	% Sing.	# Mult.	# Sing.	% Mult.	% Sing.
Resource Related	97	92	31	28	56	54	20	19
Work Related	10	10	3	3	19	17	7	6
Organisational Design	21	20	7	6	37	35	13	13
Management Process	55	54	18	17	46	44	16	11
Departmental Climate	55	54	17	17	30	30	11	11
Quality of Subordinates	36	35	11	11	54	54	20	20
Work Climate	21	21	7	7	16	16	5	5
Operational Issues	7	7	2	2	12	12	4	4
External Factors	17	16	6	5	1	1	0	0

Table 12.15 Question #7: Comparison of Multiple and Single Responses by Mapping Cluster for Problems of Departmental Performance

12.3.3 Overview of Question #7

Of the 32 response categories, four exhibited similar results, namely the need for additional personnel, Production Planning/ERP, interface with management and performance level of subordinates. The Canadians identified a greater need for plant and equipment and enhanced employee morale, whilst the Japanese perceived lack of authority and the levels of skills and training of subordinates as areas of concern. The mapping clusters reinforce these findings. However, there is a common ground in relation to management processes characteristics (lack of direction). Yet, the Canadians show a greater desire for resources and more interface with subordinates, while the Japanese expect higher skill levels from subordinates and more authority in managing their respective areas.

These findings indicate a minimal amount of concerns for factors external to the direct operations of the department. This focus is very much corroborated by the nature of the position (section 12.3.2) which was shown to focus on end results and task orientation for the Canadians, and the emphasis on the means by the Japanese as reflected by their managerial practices and training (Appendix D).

12.4 QUESTION #10 "WHAT WOULD MAKE YOUR JOB FANTASTIC THAT YOU WOULD BE EAGER TO GET TO WORK EVERYDAY?"

While Questions #4, #6 and #7 concentrate on factors to improve performance, Question #10 concentrates on measuring the sole issue of satisfaction. Along with Question #5, it investigates the positive factors in the position of first-line managers and delves into the realm of supposition, an idealistic scenario.

12.4.1 Categories Definitions and Tabulations for Making the Job Fantastic

When analysing this question, 36 categories evolved the largest number, not only in relation to categories, but also of responses in this entire study (Table 12.16). The data generated is tabulated (Table 12.17) and graphically presented (Figure 12.9). As an example, it can be seen that the largest category, 'already motivated', clearly indicates that Canadian managers are four-fold more satisfied in their work (28%) than their Japanese counterparts (7%). All other categories show a fairly even frequency distribution. The wide range of factors would indicate that there are as many reasons as there are individuals, and peculiarities to every situation. The wide spread of responses can be better assessed when subject to the mapping process.

What Would Make Your Job Fantastic That You Would Be Eager To Get To Work Everyday?

Personal Attitude: Factors which reflect more on the individual's perceptions of needs.
Job/Family Demands: Commuting time, time with family, keeping personal and work priorities in proper perspective.
Financial/Pay: Reference to financial remuneration.
Personal Growth/Knowledge: Education or experience which would enhance individual skill base.
Used Past Knowledge: Use of acquired skills.
Personal Satisfaction: Sense of accomplishment and personal achievement.
My Plans/Ideas Realised: Satisfaction of seeing one's plans and ideas implemented and consequently results.
Recognition/Opportunity for Promotion: Recognition or promotion due results obtained.
Communication: Improved flow of information.
Make Decisions/Responsibilities: Opportunity to make decisions and exercise associated responsibilities.
Completion of Task/Accomplishment: Actual completion of specific activity rather than on-going responsibility.
Develop Plan: Opportunity to develop needed plans to carry out an activity or achieve expected results.
Relationship with Management: Reference to interaction with hierarchy.
Enthusiasm, Motivation, Attitude: General attitude in the organisation as a whole, subordinates not specifically identified.
Innovation: Opportunity to develop new products/services or processes.
Corporate Results: Overall organisational results.
Mission/Purpose: Gain understanding of the organisation's aims and objectives.
Relationship with Subordinates: Interaction with subordinates to be improved.
Subordinates' Growth: Initiative by individuals to solve own problems.
Subordinates Morale: Subordinates activated, motivated, with work ethics.
Customer/User Appreciation: Communication from customers expressing satisfaction.
Higher Productivity/Improvement: Productivity and its improvement being targeted.
Working as a Team: Team work is identified without specifying whether it is practiced in the respondent's department or on a broad scope throughout the organisation.
Challenging Work: Nature of the work not providing personal challenge.
Smooth Operation: Uneventful and smooth running operations would make the job fantastic.
Creative Work: Need for creativity and challenging work rather than focus on present activities.
Already Motivated/Nothing: Satisfaction with current situation.
Don't Know/Blank: No knowledge of if and how present situation could be improved.
Other: Not fitting in any of the other categories.
Job Content: Fewer duties are key to making the job fantastic.
Develop Subordinates: Subordinates exhibiting a greater skill level.
More Resources/Systems: More resources required including computer systems.
Working Conditions: Environmental improvements such as light and temperature.
Labour Relations: Reference to union interface.
Corporate Practices and Policies: Reference to policies and practices which detract from the performance of responsibilities or are a source of aggravation.
Competent Staff: Issue of competence is not directly targeted to subordinates but applies in general.

Table 12.16 Question #10: Definition of Terms

What Would Make Your Job Fantastic That You Would Be Eager To Get To Work Everyday?

	For Referral	Canada		Japan		p
		#	%	#	%	
Personal Attitude	A	1	0	13	4.7	.000*
Job/Family Demands	B	12	4	9	2.9	.701
Financial/Pay	C	25	8	6	1.9	.002*
Personal Growth/Knowledge	D	8	3	15	5	.074
Used Past Knowledge	E	0	0	3	1	.065
Personal Satisfaction	F	11	4	22	7	.020*
My Plans/Ideas Realised	G	0	0	11	4	.000*
Recognition/Opportunity for Promotion	H	12	4	16	5	.269
Communication	I	10	3	22	7	.011*
Make Decisions/Responsibilities	J	23	7	19	6	.817
Completion of Task/Accomplishment	K	3	1	23	7	.000*
Develop Plan	L	0	0	4	1	.033*
Relationship with Management	M	11	4	18	6	.095
Enthusiasm, Motivation, Attitude	N	23	7	8	3	.015*
Innovation	O	0	0	5	2	.017*
Corporate Results	P	3	1	17	5	.001*
Mission/Purpose	Q	0	0	9	3	.001*
Relationship with Subordinates	R	3	1	7	2	.141
Subordinates' Growth	S	0	0	4	1	.033*
Subordinates Morale	T	17	5	5	2	.020*
Customer/User Appreciation	U	6	2	10	3	.207
Higher Productivity/Improvement	V	2	1	13	4	.002*
Working as a Team	W	3	1	6	2	.233
Challenging Work	X	18	6	10	3	.222
Smooth Operation	Y	6	2	8	3	.440
Creative Work	Z	0	0	15	5	.000*
Already Motivated/Nothing	AA	87	28	21	7	.000*
Don't Know/Blank	BB	8	3	15	5	.074
Other	CC	16	5	8	3	.172
Job Content	DD	8	3	4	1	.339
Develop Subordinates	EE	0	0	6	2	.009*
More Resources/System	FF	19	6	2	1	.000*
Working Conditions	GG	13	4	0	0	.001*
Labour Relations	HH	6	2	0	0	.021*
Corporate Practices and Policies	II	10	3	0	0	.003*
Competent Staff	JJ	7	2	0	0	.012

*p < .05

Table 12.17 Question #10: Tabulation of Responses for Making the Job Fantastic

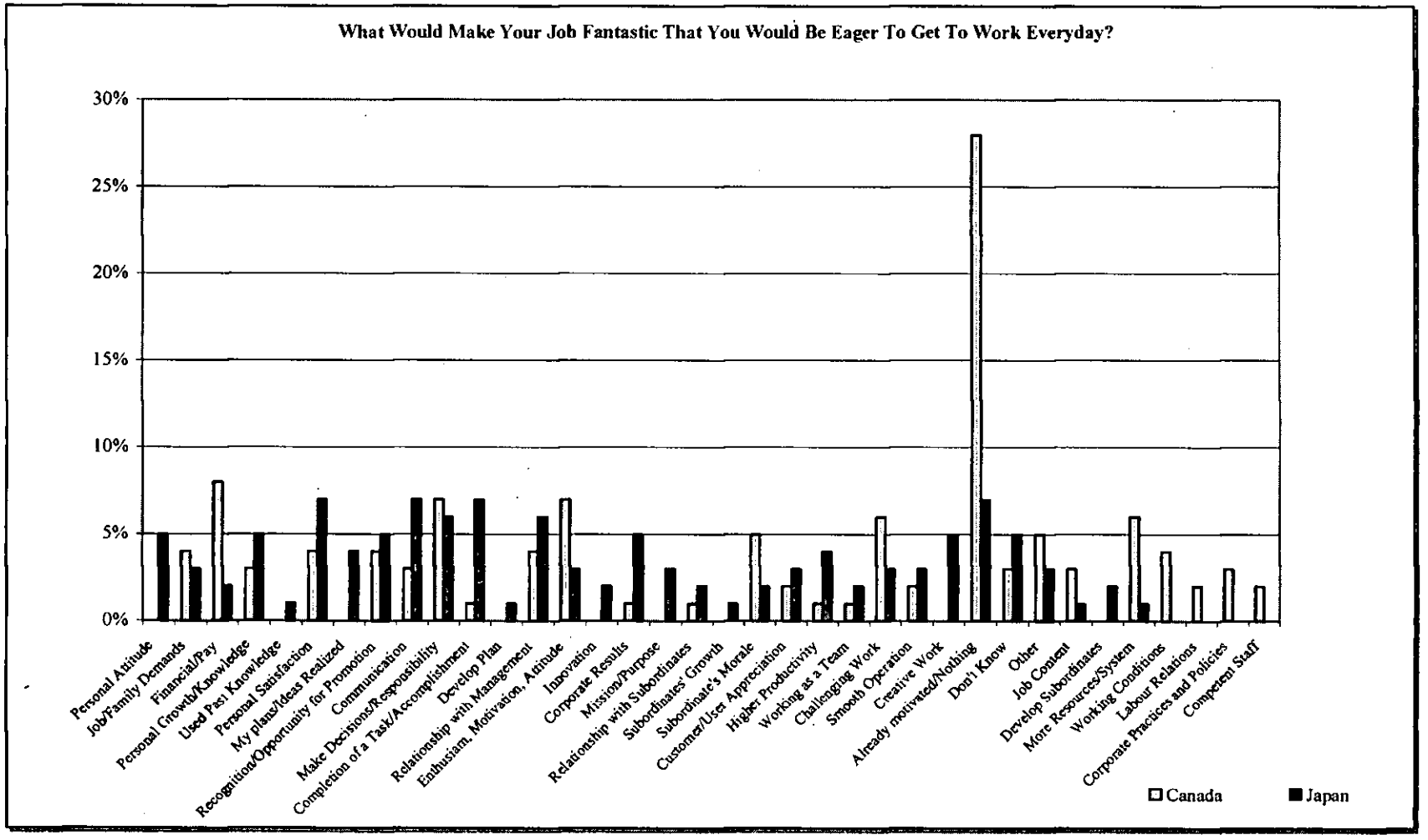


Figure 12.9 <u>**Question #10: Graph of Responses for Making the Job Fantastic**</u>

12.4.2 Mapping of Responses in Relation to Making the Job Fantastic

During the screening and mapping of responses, nine different clusters were developed combining related categories (Figure 12.10). A general cluster was also created to accommodate categories not fitting into other clusters. The results of the tabulation are shown in Table 12.18. The comparison of multiple and single count for each cluster contained in Table 12.19 shows no significant difference in the conclusions.

As can be seen, some clusters are geared towards personal concerns, some towards job satisfaction derived from the position of first-line manager, whilst others deal with the need for personal growth and self-actualisation (Maslow, 1970) and some relate to the work environment.

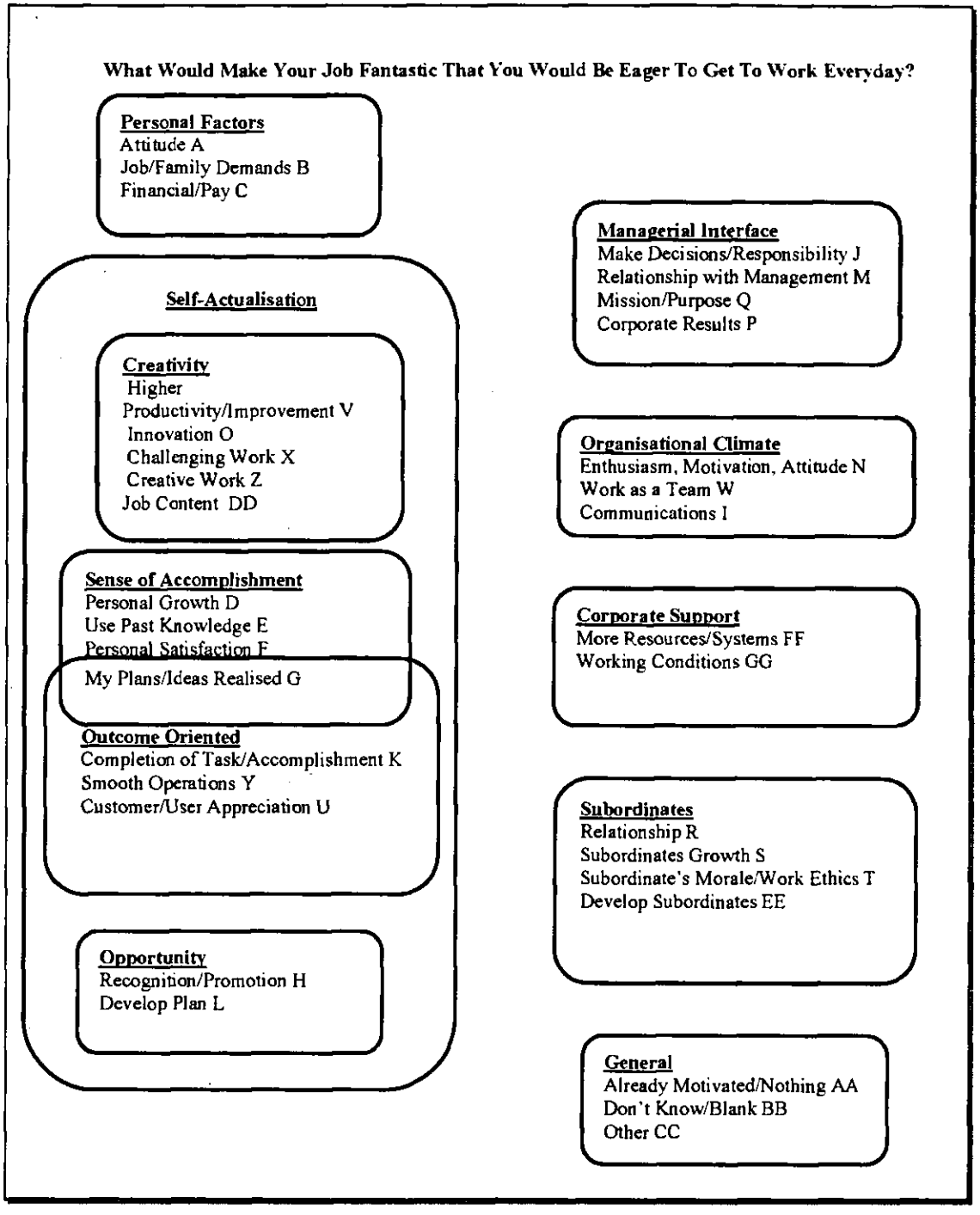


Figure 12.10 Question #10: Cognitive Mapping for Making the Job Fantastic

What Would Make Your Job Fantastic That You Would Be Eager To Get To Work Everyday?

		Canada		Japan	
		#	%	#	%
Personal Factors					
Attitude	A	1	0	13	5
Job/Family Demands	B	12	4	9	3
Financial/Pay	C	25	8	6	2
Total		38	12	28	10
Self-Actualisation					
CREATIVITY					
Higher Productivity/Improvement	V	2	1	13	5
Innovation	O	0	0	5	2
Challenging Work	X	18	6	10	4
Creative Work	Z	0	0	15	6
Job Content	DD	8	3	4	1
Sub-Total		28	10	47	18
SENSE OF ACCOMPLISHMENT					
Personal Growth	D	8	3	15	5
Use Past Knowledge	E	0	0	3	1
Personal Satisfaction	F	11	4	22	7
My Plans/Ideas Realised	G	0	0	11	4
Sub-Total		19	7	51	17
OUTCOME ORIENTED					
My Plans/Ideas Realised	G	0	0	11	4
Completion of Task/Accomplishment	K	3	1	23	8
Smooth Operations	Y	6	2	8	3
Customer/User Satisfaction	U	0	0	6	2
Sub-Total		9	3	48	17
OPPORTUNITY					
Recognition/Promotion	H	10	4	16	5
Develop Plan	L	0	0	4	1
Sub-Total		10	4	20	6
Total		66	16	166	58
Managerial Interface					
Make Decisions/Responsibility	J	23	7	19	6
Relationship with Management	M	11	4	18	6
Mission, Purpose	Q	0	0	9	3
Corporate Results	P	3	1	17	5
Total		37	12	63	20
Organisational Climate					
Work Climate Interpersonal	N	23	7	8	3
Work as a Team	W	3	1	6	2
Communications	I	10	3	22	7
Labour Relations	HH	6	2	0	0
Competent Staff	JJ	7	2	0	0
Total		49	15	36	12
Corporate Support					
More Resources/Systems	FF	19	6	2	1
Working Conditions	GG	13	4	0	0
Corporate Practices And Policies	II	10	3	0	0
Total		42	13	2	1

Continued on Next Page

Subordinates					
Relationship	R	3	1	7	3
Growth, Success	S	0	0	4	1
Activating/Motivating Work Ethic	T	17	5	5	2
Develop Subs	EE	0	0	6	2
Total		20	6	22	8
General					
Already Motivated/Nothing	AA	87	28	21	7
Don't Know/Blank	BB	8	3	15	5
Other	CC	16	5	8	3
Total		111	36	44	15

Table 12.18 Question #10: Frequency Distribution of Making the Job Fantastic by Cluster

What Would Make Your Job Fantastic That You Would Be Eager To Get To Work Everyday?

	Canada				Japan			
	# Mult.	# Sing.	% Mult.	% Sing.	# Mult.	# Sing.	% Mult.	% Sing.
Personal	38	37	12	12	28	27	10	10
Creativity	20	20	6	6	43	41	16	15
Sense of Accomplishment	19	17	6	6	51	51	18	18
Outcome Oriented	9	9	3	3	42	42	15	15
Opportunity	10	10	4	4	20	20	6	6
Managerial Interface	37	36	12	12	63	61	23	22
Organisational Climate	26	25	8	8	14	14	5	5
Corporate Support	32	31	10	10	2	2	1	1
Subordinates	20	20	6	6	22	22	8	8

Table 12.19 Question #10: Comparison of Multiple and Single Responses by Mapping Cluster for Making the Job Fantastic

12.4.3 Overview of Question #10

The single most frequent response for Canadian managers was that they are already motivated or do not need anything to make their job fantastic (28%). Interestingly, all other responses are in single digits. However, the Japanese have no single category higher than 7%. When regrouping the 36 categories into topical clusters, the Japanese

clearly show a preponderance for (1) self-actualisation, such as sense of accomplishment (18%) three times that of the Canadians and (2) creativity (16%) compared to 6% for the Canadians. Another area of difference relates to managerial interface; 22% of Japanese respondents, compared to 12% for their Canadian counterparts, seek more authority to be coupled with their responsibility. Such a finding is consistent with the Japanese approach to decision making.

When these results are compared to the Generic Performance Model one would be led to conclude that Canadians are more content than their Japanese counterparts. Given that the Japanese management process has a tendency to treat first-line managers more on the basis of seniority and more rigid in its administration (Appendix D), the whole category of self-actualization (58%) becomes a more important factor for the Japanese as compared to Canadians (16%). Therefore, the management process is clearly a factor in motivational aspects of a performance model.

12.5 QUESTIONS # 4, 6, 7, 10 – A SUMMARY

Question #4, which deals with frustrations, indicates that the prevalent categories and clusters for the Canadians deal with interaction with subordinates, and management as a close second. The dominant Japanese response is related to their interface with management.

Question #6, dealing with factors affecting respondent's own performance, shows a similar pattern whereby the frustrations with subordinates is a key concern of Canadians. The difference between the Canadians and Japanese in this area is that the Canadians are concerned with subordinates' motivation while the Japanese are concerned with

subordinates' proficiency. Both groups are concerned with their interaction with management, with the Japanese being concerned to a greater extent with the managerial decision process. Another area akin to management practices is the work climate; in this area Canadians show a greater level of concern.

Question #7, relating to factors affecting departmental performance, shows both groups concerned about production planning. The largest response for the Canadians is the departmental work climate while the Japanese are concerned with enhancing the quality and training of subordinates. Both groups show concern for the availability of resources and their management.

Question #10, "What would make your job fantastic" indicates that a third of Canadians are already satisfied. Otherwise, both populations reflect a relatively even low response rate. When the categories are aggregated into clusters, the largest single Japanese cluster relates to self-actualisation. In addition, as in previous questions, the Japanese are also concerned about their relationship with management.

Overall, how do these responses relate to goals and the Model? Three areas seem to come to the fore, namely subordinates, management, and sources of motivation as either self-assessed or derived from the recognition from others. These responses not only agree with the literature discussed in earlier chapters, but also show how the difference in values between the two management processes yield different focus points. The Canadians are self-focused and end point oriented, while the Japanese focus more on the whole, such as the development of subordinates and overall results.

These finding are consistent with goal orientation (Questions #2, #8) and training (Questions #3). The values implied contrast the means vs. ends. Furthermore, based upon the literature, the managerial process pursued in the two countries is consistent with these findings. The findings are consistent with those of Herzberg (2003), as they identify policies and relationship with management as areas of great concern as well as the interface between subordinates and management.

CHAPTER 13

RECOGNITION/FEEDBACK

He has a right to criticise who has a heart to help.
Abraham Lincoln

An industrial worker would sooner have a £5 note but a countrymon must have praise.
Akenfield

13.0 PREAMBLE

Recognition/Feedback represent the last component of the Generic Performance Model. The related two questions, combined, enquire about the sources of stimuli which are construed by the respondents as inputs in assessing performance. Question #5 "What Are Typical Gratifying Moments at Work?" does not make the distinction as to the nature or source of motivation and gratification, whilst Question #9 "How Do You Expect Your Performance Will Be Recognised?" seeks information about recognition of the individual's performance.

13.1 QUESTION #5: "WHAT ARE TYPICAL GRATIFYING MOMENTS AT WORK?"

This question intends to determine the elements which bring a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction to the respondents. As in other questions, such components as personal factors, the nature of the work and interpersonal relationships provide an insight as to the motivational aspects of performance, the environmental factors at play as well as the types of recognition/feedback expected or wished.

13.1.1 Categories Definitions & Tabulations for Gratifying Moments

This question generated a large number of responses. A total of 29 categories evolved from this question; these are presented and defined in Table 13.1. The actual distribution frequency and percentages, based upon the number of responses for each category, are tabulated (Table 13.2) and graphically exhibited (Figure 13.1).

For the Canadians, 27% acknowledged customer/user satisfaction. The Japanese, for their part, identified the attainment of goals and seeing their plans realised. These findings are interesting both from the perspective of recognition and feedback, as well as from the perspective of the nature of goals. Customer/user satisfaction reflects a focus on the ends being achieved. 'My plan realised' indicates satisfaction derived from seeing the plan meet the initial objectives. This is further reinforced by the attainment of goals which indicates an overall objective instead of specific end points. Further analysis using the mapping process described in the next section will further elucidate the implications of these findings.

What Are Typical Gratifying Moments At Work?

Promotion, Salary, Bonus: Adjustment or change in responsibility or remuneration.
Recognition from Others: Public acknowledgement with the source not being clearly defined.
Personal Attitude: Sense of personal striving for achievement.
Personal Skills Improved: Increased knowledge gained from the work through courses, experience and other sources.
Project/Job Completion: Clear start and finish of a specific task.
Attain Goal: Reaching a specific target of an overall nature as compared to a specific project.
Relationship with Subordinates: Feeling of respect, trust, fellowship or camaraderie of support of subordinates for their manager – not necessarily recognition of contribution.
Team Work, Unity of Purpose: Spirit of cooperation and joint effort between the people involved.
Customer/User Satisfaction: Acknowledgement of the value of the product/service received.
Work Environment/Conditions: Safety and other such factors related to the physical surroundings.
Corporate Results: Concern for the overall performance of the organisation such as increases in volume and profits.
Accepted Theme/Plan: Responsibility of manager to develop a plan and ensure its acceptance by the different stakeholders.
Solving Difficult Problems: Degree of challenge in the task to be accomplished.
Smooth Running Department: Operations are running without any perturbations.
Exceed Expectations: Respondent's mention of exceeding what had been planned or expected.
My plan realized: Planning, acceptance and fruition of the plan, special notice is placed on the pride of ownership of both plan and result.
Subordinates' Performance: Focus on the achievement of the subordinates.
Subordinates' Development: Personal, skill and professional growth of subordinates.
Recognition from Subordinates: Gratitude of first-line manager's contribution.
Recognition by the Boss: Specific acknowledgement by superior.
Personal Satisfaction: Personal sense of accomplishment.
Subordinates Career Advancement: Reference to the satisfaction of seeing subordinates progress.
Blank:
Other:
None: No recognition expected.
Getting Paid: Attitude at being able to earn a living, have a job and justify a pay cheque.
Innovation: Change from past practices as well as new procedures, products and solutions.
Peers' Recognition: Individual contribution appreciated by peers.
Subordinates' Motivation: Satisfaction of seeing the subordinates' attitude

Table 13.1 Question #5: Glossary of Defined Categories for Gratifying Moments

What Are Typical Gratifying Moments At Work?

	For Referral	Canada		Japan		p
		#	%	#	%	
Promotion, Salary, Bonus	A	13	4	7	3	.276
Recognition from others	B	15	5	23	8	.083
Personal Attitude	C	0	0	6	2	.009*
Personal Skills Improved	D	1	0	6	2	.039
Project/Job Completion	E	40	13	45	16	.232
Attain Goal	F	39	12	60	22	.003*
Relationship with Subordinates	G	33	11	9	3	.001*
Team Work/Unity of Purpose	H	11	4	29	10	.001*
Customer/User Satisfaction	I	86	27	18	7	.000*
Work Environment/Conditions	J	45	14	3	1	.000*
Corporate Results	K	26	8	19	7	.508
Accepted Theme/Plan	L	4	1	7	3	.263
Solving Difficult Problems	M	18	6	23	8	.224
Smooth Running Department	N	24	8	9	3	.020*
Exceed Expectations	O	18	6	8	3	.091
My Plan Realised	P	8	3	56	20	.000*
Subordinates' Performance	Q	28	9	10	4	.008*
Subordinates' Development	R	34	11	15	5	.017
Recognition from Subordinates	S	0	0	6	2	.009*
Recognition by the Boss	T	21	7	13	5	.294
Personal Satisfaction	U	25	8	7	3	.003*
Subordinates Career Advancement	V	8	3	2	1	.085
Blank	W	0	0	8	3	.002*
Other	X	13	4	10	4	.733
None	Y	7	2	5	2	.711
Getting Paid	Z	7	2	0	0	.012*
Innovation	AA	15	5	9	3	.343
Peer Recognition	BB	10	3	4	1	.163
Subordinates Motivation	CC	9	3	5	2	.394

***p value less than .05**

Table 13.2 Question #5: Tabulation of Responses for Gratifying Moments

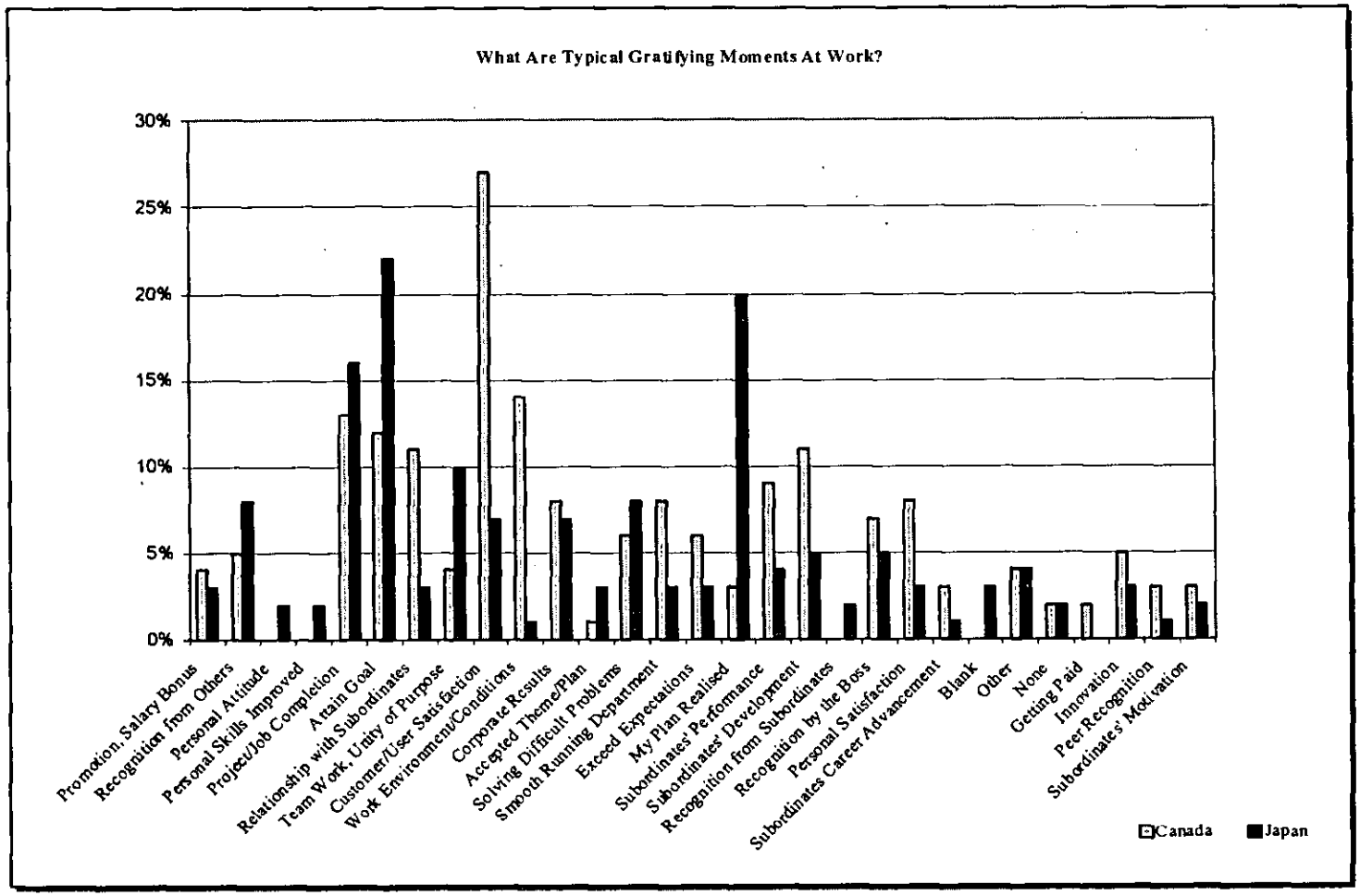


Figure 13.1 **Question #5: Graph of Responses for Gratifying Moments**

13.1.2 Mapping of Responses in Relation to Gratifying Moments

Four major clusters evolve from the various categories, namely Overall Recognition. Self-assessment, Subordinates and Organisational Climate. In addition, one cluster is composed of defensive responses, negating the expectation of gratifying moments. The General cluster is a catch-all for the categories of Other and responses left Blank. Figure 13.2 provides a graphic representation showing all of the categories grouped into clusters and Table 13.3 provides mapping cluster definitions. Table 13.4 presents the results of frequency distribution of each cluster.

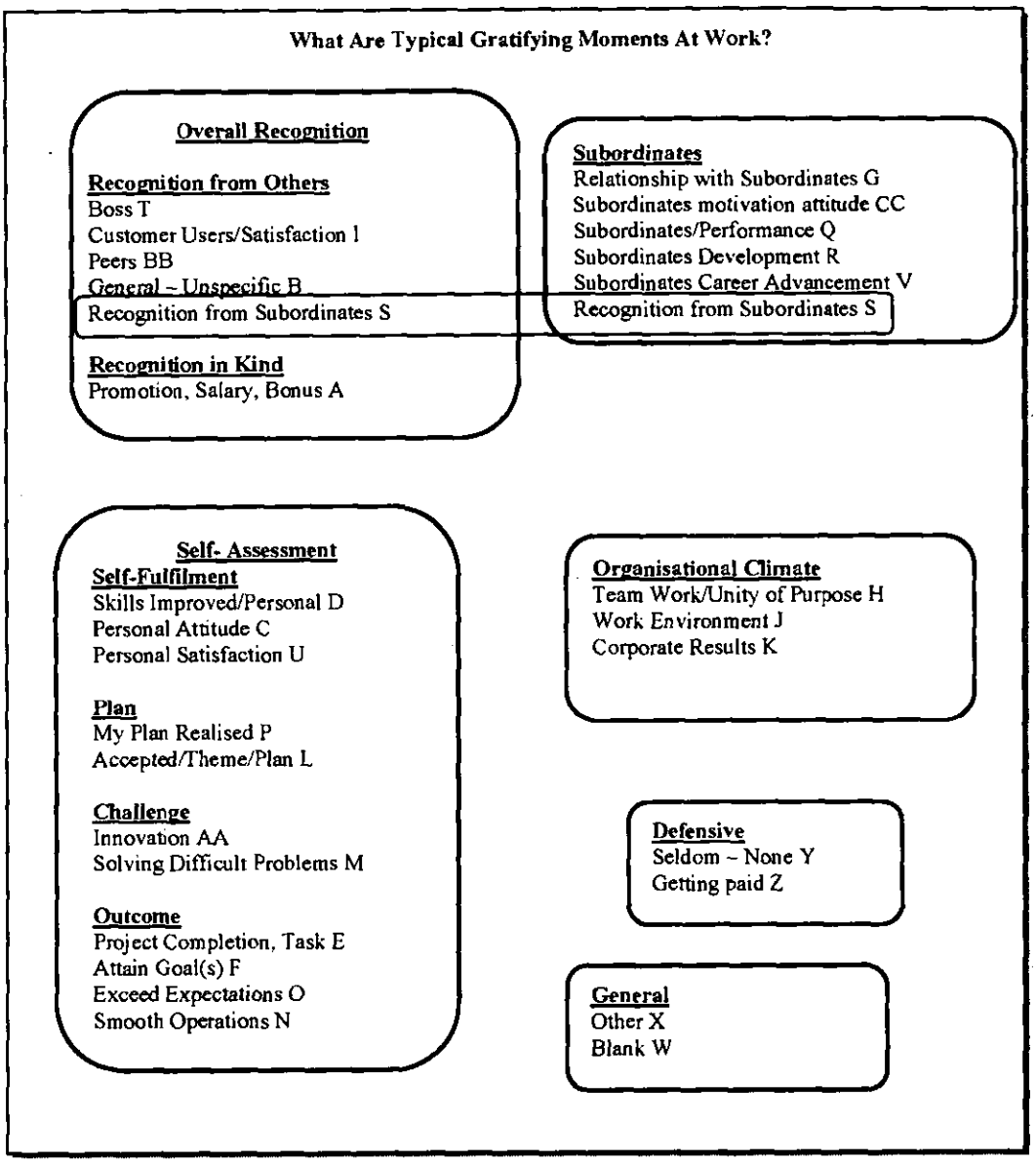


Figure 13.2 Question #5: Cognitive Mapping of Gratifying Moments

What Are Typical Gratifying Moments At Work?

Overall Recognition: To encompass both of the two previous clusters.
- RECOGNITION FROM OTHERS – Various sources of recognition such as from the boss, peers, subordinates, customers/users, or in general terms.
- RECOGNITION IN KIND – Nature rather than source of the recognition.

Self-Assessment: Self-evaluation through self-fulfilment, plan, challenge and outcome assessment.
- SELF-FULFILMENT – Personal satisfaction, personal skill improvement and personal effort and attitude.
- PLAN: Acceptance and execution of the plan, achieving a fruitful conclusion.
- CHALLENGE – New opportunities such as innovation and solving difficult problems.
- OUTCOME – Project completion, attainment of goal, and exceeding expectations, all of which imply specific outcomes.

Subordinates: Satisfaction of the progress of subordinates in the form of relationship, motivation, performance, development and career advancement, as well as the subordinates' recognition of their first-line manager.

Organisational Climate: Broad concerns where the organisational focus is not specified but concerns the whole

Defensive: No gratifying moments and that getting paid.

General: Includes all other responses which did not readily fit into any of the above categories.

Table 13.3 Question #5: Cognitive Mapping of Gratifying Moments – Definitions

What Are Typical Gratifying Moments At Work?

		Canada		Japan	
		#	%	#	%
Overall Recognition					
RECOGNITION FROM OTHERS					
Boss	T	21	7	13	5
Customer/User Satisfaction	I	86	27	18	7
Peer Recognition	BB	10	3	4	1
General – Unspecific	B	15	5	23	8
Recognition from Subordinates	S	0	0	6	2
RECOGNITION IN KIND					
Promotion, Salary, Bonus	A	13	4	7	3
Sub-Total		132	42	64	23
Total		145	46	64	23
Self-Assessment					
SELF-FULFILMENT					
Personal Skills Improved	D	1	0	6	2
Personal Attitude	C	0	0	6	2
Personal Satisfaction	U	25	8	7	3
Sub-Total		26	8	19	7
PLAN					
My Plan Realised	P	8	3	56	20
Accepted Theme/Plan	L	4	1	7	3
Sub-Total		12	4	63	23
CHALLENGE					
Innovation	AA	15	5	9	3
Solving Difficult Problems	M	18	6	23	8
Sub-Total		33	11	32	11
OUTCOME					
Project/Job Completion	E	40	13	45	16
Attain Goal	F	39	12	60	22
Exceed Expectations	O	18	6	8	3
Smooth Operations	N	24	8	9	3
Sub-Total		121	39	122	44
Total		192	61	236	85
Subordinates					
Relationship with Subordinates	G	33	11	9	3
Subordinates' Motivation	CC	9	3	5	2
Subordinates' Performance	Q	28	9	10	4
Subordinates' Development	R	34	11	15	5
Subordinates' Career Advancement	V	8	3	2	1
Recognition from Subordinates	S	0	0	6	2
Total		112	36	47	17
Organisational Climate					
Team Work/Unity of Purpose	H	11	4	29	10
Work Environment/Conditions	J	45	14	3	1
Corporate Results	K	26	8	19	7
Total		82	26	51	18

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Defensive					
None	Y	7	2	5	2
Getting Paid	Z	7	2	0	0
Total		14	4	5	2
General					
Other	X	13	4	10	4
Blank	W	0	0	8	3
Total		13	4	18	6

Table 13.4 Question #5 Frequency Distribution of Gratifying Moments by Cluster

From the mapping process, four clusters seem to come to the fore:

1. **Self-assessment:** This cluster includes four different facets: self-fulfilment, planning with the ability to impact on the direction of the department, challenges as well as deriving satisfaction from outcomes, such as meeting/exceeding goals through the completion of projects or tasks. The source of satisfaction is based upon personal assessment of the situation.

2. **Overall Recognition:** This cluster includes recognition in kind, be it promotion, salary and/or bonus, as well as personal recognition from others, such as from the boss, peers and so on.

3. **Subordinates:** This cluster refers to the attitude, performance and advancement/development of subordinates, as well as the sense of satisfaction derived from them.

4. **Organisational Climate:** This cluster is composed of one category that clearly refers to corporate results and two which do not specify the scope of their application as directly related to the inner workings of the department. Both, Team Work/ Unity of Purpose and Work Environment/Conditions are also part of this cluster.

	Canada		Japan	
	#	%	#	%
Self-assessment	192	61	236	85
Overall Recognition	145	46	71	26
Subordinates	112	36	47	17
Organisational Climate	82	26	51	18

It can be seen that Canadians have a greater propensity to seek recognition over the Japanese. They indicate a greater sense of satisfaction from the subordinates' performance results. The Japanese, on the other hand, are more self-introspective.

The category, 'My plans realised', illustrates that their inner sense of performance satisfaction is derived from the opportunity for planning and ensuring that this materialises.

As in previous questions, the comparison of each cluster or sub-cluster was made between multiple and single count (Table 13.5). The results show little difference between the two methods of calculating percentages and the overall conclusions remain unaffected.

What Are Typical Gratifying Moments At Work?

	Canada				Japan			
	# Mult.	# Sing.	% Mult.	% Sing.	# Mult.	# Sing.	% Mult.	% Sing.
Recognition From Others	132	120	42	38	64	58	23	21
Recognition in Kind	13	13	4	4	7	7	3	3
Overall Recognition	145	130	46	41	71	59	26	21
Subordinates	112	95	36	30	41	39	15	14
Self Assessment	112	95	36	30	41	39	15	14
Self-fulfilment	26	26	8	8	19	18	7	7
Plan	12	12	4	4	63	61	23	22
Challenge	33	33	11	11	32	31	12	11
Outcome	115	112	37	36	136	117	49	42
Defensive	14	14	5	5	5	5	2	2

Table 13.5 Question #5: Comparison of Multiple and Single Responses by Cluster for Gratifying Moments

These findings reflect factors similar to Herzberg (2003) whereby self-fulfilment, the joy of developing and seeing the results of one's own plans, the opportunity to face challenges and meeting the objectives are key to performance. These factors are more a function of the managerial process than of specific individual outcomes. From a productivity model point of view, the symbiotic interaction between the what and the how are inextricably intertwined. The differences between frequency of response

between Canadian and Japanese managers are consistent with differences in managerial practices (Whitehill, 1991; Stoh, 1994).

13.1.3 Overview of Question #5

The largest individual category for the Canadians was customer/user satisfaction. Conversely, the largest responses from the Japanese was to attain the goal with subordinates and to see their plans being realised. The results of the clustering process further confirm the findings of previous questions, whereby Canadians show a greater concern for recognition and their relationship with subordinates, while the Japanese are more introspective.

13.2 QUESTION 9: "HOW DO YOU EXPECT YOUR PERFORMANCE WILL BE RECOGNISED?"

The distinction between recognition and evaluation is an important one. Not only does recognition imply the performance accomplished, but it also carries with it the broader concept of acknowledgement by others of a job well done (Robbins & Langton, 1999). The main purpose of this question was not to investigate the nature, fairness or appropriateness of recognition, but to determine how the respondent perceives his/her performance is being recognised. The wording of the question is very much slanted towards a system which recognises individual performance rather than group performance, as in Japan. The expectation is that the responses are influenced by existing practices or values. In Japan, the process of evaluation is highly procedural, administered as a corporate general administration function. Because the Japanese salary and promotion system is highly influenced by seniority, the responses should reflect such practices. From a Western perspective, the issue is best illustrated by the results of two words searches (1) performance recognition – 17 articles, one of which

proved to be pertinent (2) performance evaluation – 2653 scholarly articles. The emphasis in the literature is obviously on evaluation. The emphasis placed on individual performance and evaluation is reflected in these statistics.

13.2.1 Categories Definitions and Tabulations for Performance Recognition

A total of 27 categories were identified and defined (Table 13.6). Their relative frequency is shown on Table 13.7.

How Do You Expect Your Performance Will Be Recognised?
Personal/Public Awards: Recognition of individual contribution through public recognition and awards.
Self-Assessed/Superior Performance: Assessment by the individual that performance is superior to expectations.
Personal Satisfaction: Sense of satisfaction derived from the effort expended.
General Compliments: Being the recipient of compliments from sources not specified.
Position Related/Promotion: Outcomes related to changes in position/ promotion.
New Challenges: Reference to new assignments or projects of a different nature from those just completed.
Responsibilities: As a result of performance, the individual expects additional responsibilities.
Financial: Financial rewards are expected.
Overall Results: Expectation that performance will be measured on the basis of overall performance of the organisation.
Meeting the Goal: General satisfaction from meeting the goal.
Subordinates' Department Results: Departmental results as source of recognition.
Evaluation from Subordinates: Evaluation of subordinates a source of recognition.
Evaluation from Other Departments: Feedback from other departments as source of recognition.
Evaluation from Superior: Evaluation by a higher authority as source of recognition.
Don't Know: Uncertainty as to how performance might be recognised.
Nothing: No recognition is provided.
Blank:
Other: Responses do not fit into any of the categories.
Feedback from Customers: Customers' letters of appreciation and other forms of feedback.
Periodic Performance Review: Regular performance reviews.
Peers: Feedback from peers.
Keeping/Having a Job: Specific comments that relate to the issue of keeping one's job.
Corporate Results: Corporate results as source of recognition of performance.
By Results: No specific nature of recognition except as based upon results.
None will be given: Categorically no recognition will be given.
Not Much: Little hope of any recognition.
Group Performance: Group performance as a criterion for assessing performance.

Table 13.6 Question #9: Glossary of Defined Categories For Performance Recognition

How Do You Expect Your Performance Will Be Recognised?

	For Referral	Canada		Japan		p
		#	%	#	%	
Personal/Public Awards	A	18	6	9	3	.146
Self-Assessed/Superior Performance	B	0	0	6	2	.009*
Personal Satisfaction	C	24	8	25	9	.552
General Compliments	D	0	0	9	3	.001*
Position Related/Promotion	E	19	6	39	14	.001*
New Challenges	F	0	0	13	5	.000*
Responsibilities	G	20	6	6	2	.013*
Financial	H	114	36	59	21	.000*
Overall Results	I	0	0	67	24	.000*
Meeting the Goal	J	0	0	9	3	.001*
Subordinates' Department Results	K	0	0	18	7	.000*
Evaluation from Subordinates	L	19	6	5	2	.009*
Evaluation from Other Departments	M	0	0	6	2	.009*
Evaluation from Superior	N	86	27	16	6	.000*
Don't Know	O	8	3	9	3	.616
Nothing	P	0	0	9	3	.001*
Blank	Q	8	3	17	6	.031*
Other	R	9	3	14	5	.173
Feedback from Customers	S	26	8	9	3	.000*
Periodic Performance Review	T	46	15	0	0	.000*
Peers	U	15	5	0	0	.000*
Keeping/Having a Job	V	10	3	0	0	.003*
Corporate Results	W	15	5	0	0	.000*
By Results	X	15	5	0	0	.000*
None will be Given	Y	25	8	0	0	.000*
Not Much	Z	18	6	0	0	.000*
Group Performance	AA	17	5	0	0	.000*

*p < .05

Table 13.7 Question #9: Tabulation of Responses for Performance Recognition

As can be seen, the largest Canadian response relates to financial recognition (36%), followed by evaluation from superior (27%) and periodic performance review (15%), 27% of the Japanese first-line managers responded strongly to financial recognition, a percentage significantly lower than their Canadian counterparts. Overall results (24%) are greater for the Japanese, indicating a precedence for organisational over personal outcomes.

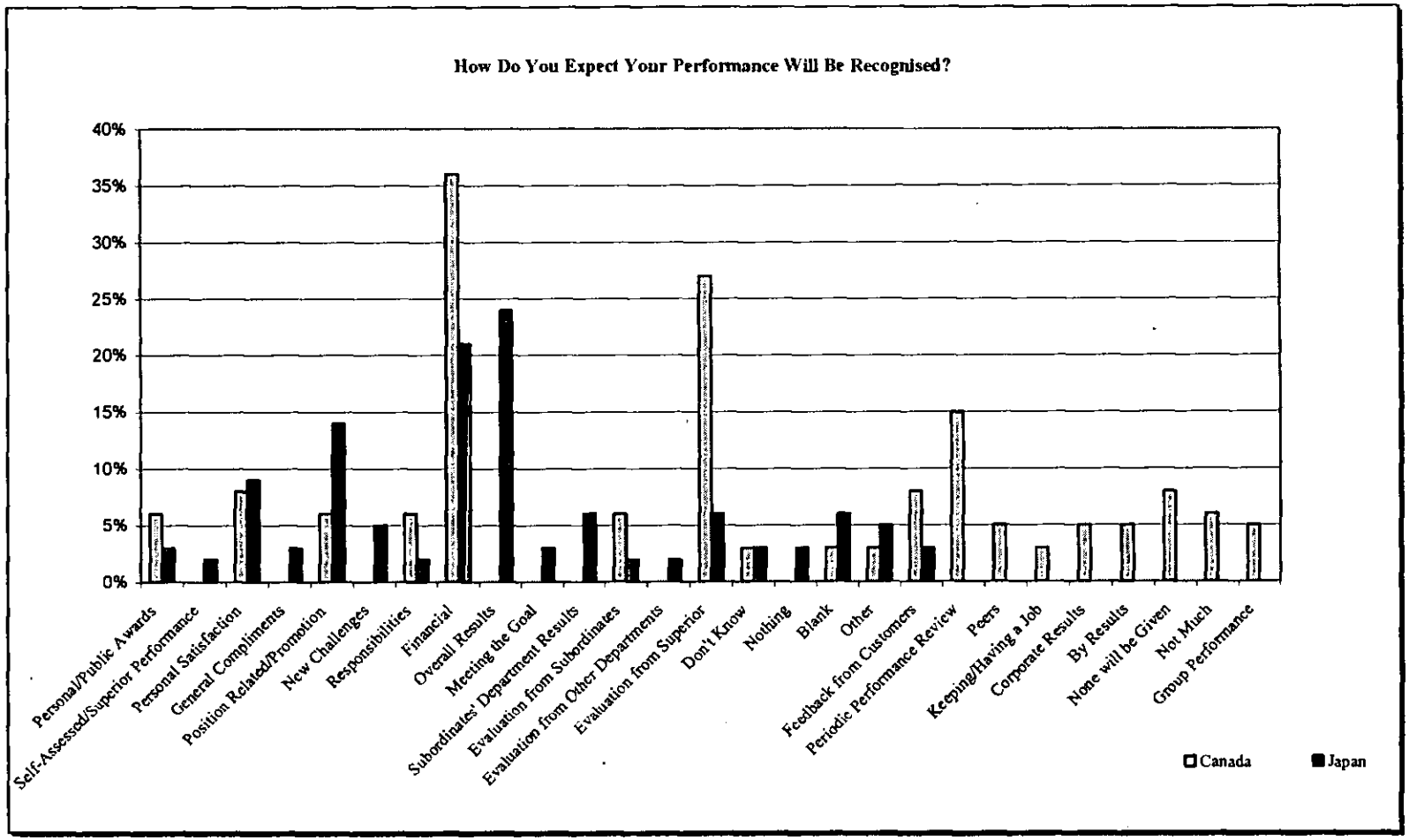

Figure 13.3 <u>Question #9: Graph of Responses for Performance Recognition</u>

13.2.2 Mapping of Responses in Relation to Performance Recognition

From the mapping process, a total of five major clusters evolve from the response categories; (1) determined by self-assessment, (2) personal outcomes such as new challenges, promotion, responsibilities, or financial rewards, (3) reflecting the sources of evaluation such as from superiors, peers and subordinates, (4) based upon the results achieved by the group, subordinates or the organisation as a whole and (5) indicating a lack of formal responsiveness on the part of the organisation. Figure 13.4 provides a graphic representation showing the categories grouped into clusters and Table 13.8 provides the clusters' definitions. Table 13.9 presents the frequency distribution for each respective cluster.

As in the case for goal setting (Questions #2 and #8), the range of responses covers measures, sources, outcomes and organisational indifference. In retrospect, the use of the word 'recognised' in Question #9 could be construed in a variety of ways. The intended use of the word came from the definition from dictionaries, namely 'to acknowledge formally' (Webster, 1984). Others include 'to acknowledge with a show of appreciation' and 'to perceive to be something previously known'. The Question does not specify who, where or how the recognition assessment should take place nor what the outcome of such assessments should be. The majority of the Canadian responses relate to the source of the assessments, either from others or from self-assessment, or by personal outcomes of which the financial recognition is a major element. From the Japanese data, the evaluation from others is not as prevalent. The largest category relates to personal outcomes, including financial recognition (42%) followed by results (34%).

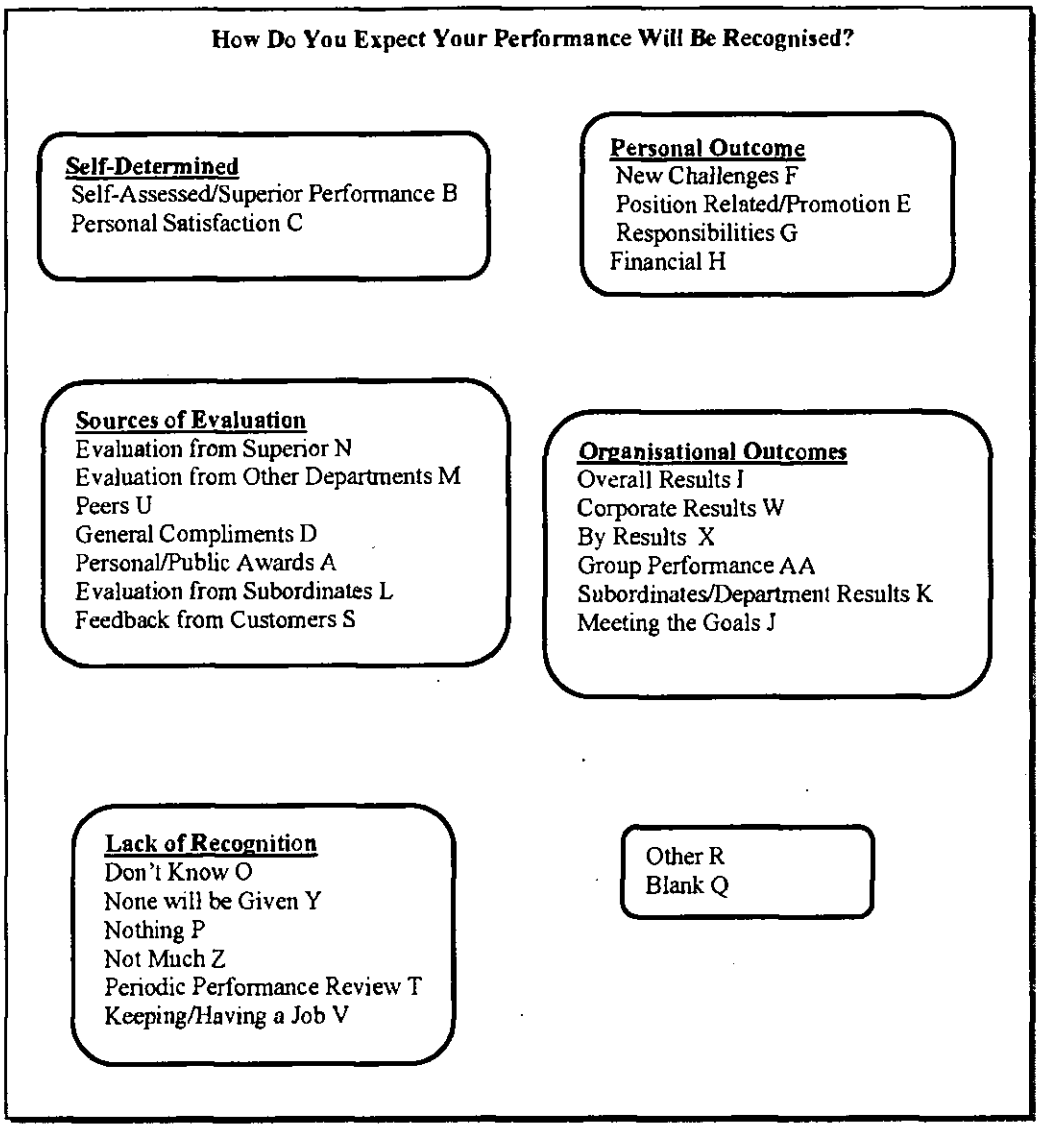

Figure 13.4 **Question #9: Cognitive Mapping of Performance Recognition**

How Do You Expect Your Performance Will Be Recognised?

Self-Determined: References to self-assessment and sense of personal satisfaction.
Personal Outcomes: New challenges, promotion and increased responsibility considered as doors to new opportunities.
Sources of Evaluation: Acknowledgement from superiors, other departments, peers, subordinates and public recognition in the form of general compliments and awards – all of which are internal to the organisation.
Organisational Outcomes: Results from overall, corporate, subordinates/departmental and unspecified as well as group performance and the meeting of goals.
Lack of Recognition: Lack of specificity, such as don't know, blank, not much, none will be given or nothing.

Table 13.8 Question #9: Cognitive Mapping of Job Recognition – Definitions

The frequency distribution of these clusters and categories are shown in Table 13.9 with the total count of each of the clusters and respective percent based upon the number of questionnaires as well as the individual line items which make up that total. The results illustrate that both populations have unique characteristics. The largest responses for the Canadians are evaluation from others (52%-19%) and financial recognition (36%-21%). The Japanese on their part show a greater propensity to be intrinsically motivated by the results (15%-34%) and the prospect of new challenges (12%-21%). Surprisingly, 20% of Canadians expect little recognition compared to 12% for their Japanese counterparts.

How Do You Expect Your Performance Will Be Recognised?

		Canada		Japan	
		#	%	#	%
Self-Determined					
Self-Assessed/Superior Performance	B	0	0	6	2
Personal Satisfaction	C	24	8	25	9
Total		24	8	31	11
Personal Outcome					
New Challenges	F	0	0	13	5
Position Related/Promotion	E	19	6	39	14
Responsibilities	G	20	6	6	2
Financial	H	114	36	59	21
Total		153	48	117	42
Sources of Evaluation					
Evaluation from Superior	N	86	27	16	6
Evaluation Other Departments	M	0	0	6	2
Peers	U	15	5	0	0
General Compliments	D	0	0	9	3
Personal/Public Awards	A	18	6	9	3
Evaluation from Subordinates	L	19	6	5	2
Feedback from Customers	S	26	8	9	3
Total		164	52	54	19
Organisational Outcomes					
Overall Results	I	0	0	67	24
Corporate Results	W	15	5	0	0
By Results	X	15	5	0	0
Meeting the Goal	J	0	0	9	3
Group Performance	AA	17	5	0	0
Subordinate'/Department Results	K	0	0	18	7
Total		47	15	94	34
Lack of Recognition					
Don't Know	O	8	3	9	3
None will be Given	Y	25	8	0	0
Nothing	P	0	0	9	3
Not Much	Z	18	6	0	0
Periodic Performance Review	T	46	15	0	0
Keeping/Having a Job	V	10	3	0	0
Total		107	35	18	6
Blank	Q	8	3	17	6
Other	R	9	3	14	5
Total		17	6	31	11

Table 13.9 Question #9: Frequency Distribution of Performance Recognition by Cluster

13.2.3 Overview of Question #9

The recognition dimension for the Canadian first-line managers is that of personal recognition while for the Japanese it conveys expectations related to the overall performance. These findings are consistent with the previous questions dealing with the training requirements, goal setting and expectations as well as the sources of frustration and satisfaction. Certain individual categories are unique to either population, such as 'Keeping/Having a Job', as found in the Canadian responses. Such responses are totally absent from the Japanese, which reflects the fundamental difference as to the sense of security and organisational obligation towards employees. Only one area seemed to show commonality between the two populations, the area of personal satisfaction in relation to a job well done.

In terms of the model, the most disconcerting finding is to have 35% of the Canadian sample state that little or no recognition was expected. This identifies a serious void in the management process. This has been acknowledged in a series of articles (Hall, 1973; Garvin, 1986; Wickens, 1987; Maruca, 1996), whereby the man-in-the-middle and other such phrases describe the unappreciated position in which first-line managers find themselves.

13.3 QUESTIONS #5 AND #9 – A SUMMARY

The results of Questions #5 and #9 reinforce the findings of previous questions. For the Canadians, the issue at the forefront is personal evaluation driven by external sources, while for the Japanese self-assessment is dominant. Both populations share the same

degree of expectation when it comes to positive personal outcomes. In Question #5, the combination of subordinates and organisational climate shows that Canadians are very anxious about the human dimension of the equation. Furthermore, over a third of them acknowledge, in one form or another, little or no recognition. This is contrasted with the Japanese who are concerned about organisational outcomes. These findings are consistent with the results to the other questions in highlighting the Canadians concern on end results and recognition of their own efforts, as compared to the Japanese who focus on the process of getting there and the overall impact on the organisation.

Most models dealing with productivity acknowledge recognition/feedback as a key element of the management process. These findings demonstrate the need to view recognition, not as an after-thought but as a deliberate part of that process.

PART IV

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE FINDINGS

Part IV is composed of two chapters. Chapter 14 reviews the findings of each of the questions. Using the Generic Performance Model as its framework, goals, environmental characteristics and recognition/feedback are reviewed, firstly as individual building blocks and secondly as a holistic process which integrates the results into a coherent depiction of the responses from the two populations. The findings are compared with the literature dealing with the respective topics. Moreover, the implications of the results on current managerial practices in Canada and Japan are discussed. The findings would lead one to conclude that corporate practices do influence the perceptions of goals and that training needs are consistent with the characterisation of these practices. The importance of the underlining corporate values of the two populations is underscored as the unifying thread between the various components of the Generic Performance Model. The model is then reviewed in light of the findings and the interaction between values and the various elements of the model is brought to the fore. The nature of goals (the ends or the means), the development of first-line managers, feedback and recognition are contiguous in nature and are a reflection of corporate practices and thus, values.

Chapter 15 aims to ascertain that the objectives of the research described in Chapter 1 have been met. The adequacy of the methodology employed is reviewed in the light of criticism levied at previous research. A summary of the findings and their implications is provided. The findings, as well as the methodology employed, are validated by the existing literature pertaining to the various elements of the Model. The comprehensive nature of the methodology as well as the Model proffered take into account the holistic nature of the management of performance. These represent the contribution to

knowledge. As previously stated, 'the end is where we start from' and recommendations derived from the research are made for practical use as well as for future research.

CHAPTER 14

INTERPRETATION AND DISCUSSION

As for the future, your task is not to foresee, but to enable it.
Saint-Exupery

14.0 PREAMBLE

This chapter is composed of eight parts. The first section, based upon the review of the literature pertaining to the variables of the Generic Performance Model, reflects on the centrality of the role of first-line managers. It is followed by the four sections related to each of the factors of the Generic Performance Model, starting with goals where the results are assessed in view of the literature directly pertaining to each of the subject matters. In Section 14.6, the inherent characteristics of the model are then reviewed in light of the data. The findings are then assessed across all questions. The comprehensive picture and internal consistency of the responses between the various questions manifest the holistic nature of the findings. Their consistency in focus can be explained by the underpinning of values. Based upon these findings, an enhanced Generic Performance Model is proffered which reflects both the perspective of this level of management and these inherent characteristics. Upon these insights, the implications are explored in terms of the management practices.

14.1 FIRST-LINE MANAGERS – KEY ELEMENT OF PERFORMANCE

Models related to productivity/performance (Chapter #3) not only include variables such as goals, self-efficacy, training, and recognition/feedback, but also acknowledge the importance of supervision. From the Hawthorne and self-efficacy studies, the human

interaction is recognized as an important dimension. As a group, first-line managers directly oversee the majority of human resources and are a key link in the management chain. According to Hacker & Kleiner (2000), they are the planners and implementers who work to integrate the strategic priorities with organisational realities. The concomitant effect of the supervisor's ability and efficacy in the implementation process in each of these areas requires that this particular level of management receive closer attention.

Various sources (Cutcher-Gershenfeld, 1991; Huselid, 1995; Wood, 1999a; Godard & Delaney, 2000) speak of 'transformational labour relations', 'high performance' work and human resource management, 'high involvement' or 'high performance management' practices. In each, first-line managers play an integral part. Self-efficacy models also address the issues of feedback, training, and social interaction which, obviously, involve first-line managers. Lord & Brown (2001) emphasise that "leaders can impact on many subordinates processes by influencing their self-concepts by making particular values salient". They conclude by stating that they "suspect that leaders tend to focus on concrete and salient issues such as subordinate behaviours or goals rather than abstract regulatory processes. However, if goals and behaviour reflect strong constraints from identities and values, failure to consider the operation of an entire system of constraints is likely to produce leadership actions that are only marginally effective". Shea & Howell (1998) further point out that leaders' behaviour provides an important source of modelling for their subordinates to see others in similar endeavours as well as to observe the impact on one's self-efficacy. According to Jung & Avolio (1999),

'transactional leaders' main focus in setting goals is to clarify the link between performance and rewards while transformational leaders develop a closer relationship between leader and followers. The tabulation results of question #2 and #8 go beyond the style of leadership and underscore the difference in goals.

To focus on these individuals is more than a rhetorical question about culture or choice, but one of good management. Longenecker & Stansfield (2000), in their analysis of why plant managers fail, identify fifteen reasons, all of which, in one way or another, relate to interpersonal skills, and ten of which directly relate to interfacing with subordinates. Ineffective managerial support which includes, communications breakdowns, ineffective supervision and management as well as lack of teamwork and cooperation, can quickly create barriers to workforce productivity (Longenecker *et al*, 1998). Supervisors with high perceived expertise or referent power will tend to motivate improvement following negative feedback (Fedor *et al*, 2000). This finding underpins the need for supervisors' level of expertise and the subordinate's own perception. Thus, leaders must exhibit greater concern for the welfare of others; this may have certain previously unrecognised practical advantages for organizations in dynamic economic environments (Korsgaard *et al*, 1997). Behaviours intended to help others at work and concern for others may represent an important qualification to behavioural and organisational models (Korsgaard *et al*, 1997). First-line managers not only perform a unique role but can also provide a unique value-added.

Whether in the process of using goals (See sections 2.4.4; 4.2.5), self-efficacy (3.5.3) in the form of training or feedback and the motivation of subordinates (5.2.6), the literature relevant to the various elements of the Generic Performance Model acknowledges the key role that first-line managers play. Through their interaction with subordinates, they affect outcomes and thus, productivity. It is because of their key role that the research focused on the perceptions at the first-line management level.

14.2 THE GOAL FOCUS OF FIRST-LINE MANAGERS

A quick synopsis of the salient findings related to the topic of goals is provided. It reviews the various theoretical perspectives and interprets the results in relation to their managerial implications.

14.2.1 Review of the Findings Related to Goals

The goal focus is explored by asking two questions, one dealing with the first-line managers' perception of their boss's expectations (Question #2) and the second based upon the individual's own expectations (Question #8). A comparison of the tabulated results of these two questions puts forth perspectives unique to each of the populations. In addition, these findings are consistent with the body of knowledge describing the managerial practices of these two countries.

The categorisation of Question #2 responses by organisational focus (Table 14.1) reveals that Canadians place an emphasis on the position or role the respondents are called to perform while their Japanese counterparts focus on the inner workings of the department.

When tabulated on the basis of the functions or activities performed, Canadians display a strong indication to administer and focus on specific outcomes or results while the Japanese concentrate on leading and developing subordinates.

What Were Your Boss's Expectations When You Took This Position?

Area of Emphasis	Canada %	Japan %
Canadian Pre-eminence		
Position	45	30
Administer	38	14
Outcomes/Results	28	9
Japanese Pre-eminence		
Inner Workings of the Department	25	36
Leading	2	20
Developing Subordinates	7	17

Table 14.1 Question #2: Areas of Goal Emphasis

The mapping results of the boss's expectations (Table 14.2) show that the Canadians are more task/end-point oriented while the Japanese aim to affect the inner workings of their department to effect change and influence subordinates.

What Were Your Boss's Expectations When You Took This Position?

Area of Emphasis	Canada %	Japan %
Task/End Point Oriented	66	23
Department Inner Workings	15	42
Influence Subordinates	20	51

Table 14.2 Question #2: Goal Mapping – Areas of Emphasis

Both tabulations show a clear tendency to focus on the results for the Canadians and for the Japanese on the drivers such as departmental issues and subordinates. This illustrates two distinct concepts of goals, the means or the ends.

The largest single response to Question #8 "What do you expect to accomplish this year?" is, for Canadian managers, to improve the results of the department in terms of volume, productivity and/or profitability whereas, for the Japanese, it relates to the completion of a specific project (Table 14.3). Regrouping some of the individual responses around organisational focus, the same pattern evolves; the Canadians strive for personal recognition while the Japanese wish to improve their effectiveness in order to better serve the group. The Japanese managers also exhibit a greater need for planning and structure.

What Do You Expect to Accomplish This Year?

	Canada	Japan
Area of Emphasis	**%**	**%**
Departmental Results	31	16
Completion of Specific Projects	15	19
Personal Recognition	22	12
Serve the Group	6	14
Planning	5	11

Table 14.3 Question #8: Areas of Emphasis

When the mapping procedure is applied, the findings are similar to those found when individual responses are tabulated. The Canadians show a concern for the 'end product' and for personal acknowledgement while the Japanese seek to gain intimate knowledge of their team's duties and to organise the group's activities (Table 14.4).

What Do You Expect to Accomplish This Year?

Area of Emphasis	Canada %	Japan %
End Product	73	57
Personal Acknowledgement	22	12
Gain Knowledge of Team's Duties	11	18
Organise Group's Activities	5	11

Table 14.4 Question #8: Personal Accomplishments Mapping – Areas of Emphasis

In order to illustrate the differences, the results of the two questions dealing with goals are summarised by areas of dominant responses (Table 14.5). The bracketed percentages indicate that the responses of the managers in that country's sample are substantially less than the other country's responses. The difference between the two countries' samples are also statistically significant.

Question #2: What Were Your Boss's Expectations? and Question #8: What Do You Expect To Accomplish This Year?

Related Question #	Task/Outcome		Continual Improvement		Personal Benefit		Subordinates Focus	
	Canada %	Japan %	Canada %	Japan %	Canada %	Japan %	Canada %	Japan %
Question #2	66	(23)			22	(12)		
Quest ion #8	31	(16)			21	(12)		
Question #2			(15)	42			(20)	51
Question #8			(5)	11			(1)	13

Table 14.5 Areas of Dominant Responses for Questions #2 and #8

These results are consistent between the two questions. When analysing the results to both questions jointly, the data shows that Canadian first-line managers pay more attention to short-term end-results as well as exhibit their concern for recognition as the person accountable for the results. The Japanese responses reflect a concern for greater insights into the operations and the development of people. The significant statistical

difference clearly underscores that these two populations possess a different set of management values, which can be best described as the choice of goals between the ends or the means.

14.2.2 The Findings Related to Goals Compared with the Literature

The dichotomy found in the responses of the populations can be compared to the existing literature from two different perspectives of what constitutes goals: the ends or the means. The results are confirmed by literature dealing with (1) the description of Japanese management practices, (2) the comparison of Western/North-American with Japanese management practices, and (3) findings related to goal research. They are consistent with the observation made by Lorriman & Kenjo (1996) that "Job descriptions of managers in Western companies are almost invariably task-oriented; in Japanese companies they are always focused on the responsibility of managers to develop the skills of their staff and to foster good communications and teamwork", in other words, it is process rather than task-oriented. The same distinction is made by the Harvard-educated Chairman of Mitsubishi (Kurtzman, 1996); he observes that "Short term, financially driven results are characteristic of North American business compared to the Japanese business practice which places the interest of employees at the head of the priorities list, combined with a long term perspective". Such differences in the managerial process between Japan and Canada are very much reflected in the responses of first-line managers.

The North-American short-term outlook, with the goal emphasis on profit as the dominant purpose, is acknowledged by Nash (1990). Similarly, the ready-made availability of certain statistics, such as accounting information, have a tendency to reinforce such an outlook (House, 1996). The predominance of financial measures is also decried by Daniels & Burns (1997). The analogy can be made with 'ends or means' to what Shank *et al*, (1995) calls 'drivers' and 'results'. He states that "Traditionally, commitments have been expressed in dollar terms. It is inevitable that management will attempt to influence financial results directly. This can produce highly dysfunctional outcomes". As far as Pritchard (1990a) believes, "You get what you measure" and "you get what you reinforce" (Luthans & Stajkovic, 1999). The first-line managers' aim is predictable when the emphasis is placed on current financial performance.

The conflicting signals are not just between theory and practice but are also reflected in both the literature and the market place in the form of conflicting expectations pertaining to the choice of emphasis, the ends or the means. According to Rabey (1997), at the supervisors' level, the conflict lies in the fact that they are so busy maintaining outputs that they have inadequate time to carry out their supervisory functions. Output is dependent upon the skills of those who lead; yet, few frontline managers are adequately equipped for the job in today's unremitting pressure on bottom line results. Such a dilemma is being verbalised by their frustrations with the nature of the management interaction and policies. Not only is there a symbiotic relationship between the elements which are being tackled by various techniques, but there is also a much more synergetic

relationship between environmental factors, self-efficacy, goals and performance as revealed by the responses.

14.2.3 Implications of the Findings Related to Goals

This research seeks to elucidate the nature of goals at the first-line management level by juxtaposing the various goal related theories with the actual perceptions of the two populations. In Chapter 2, various theories have shown that a wide range of goal perspectives are possible such as the end or the means, the process and interpersonal dynamics.

Goals can be set for different reasons and the nature of those goals can vary accordingly (Tett *et al*, 2000). The selection process at the individual level as to which will be acted upon (Kleinbeck & Schmidt, 1990), and the reduction process of overall goals into personal or organisational goals (Kaplan & Norton, 1992; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1999; Hacker & Kleiner, 2000) present the opportunity for individual interpretations and choices. Kaplan & Norton (1992) suggest that goals may differ depending on the ulterior motives, be they finance, customer value or innovation related, or, as in this research's findings, the need to activate human resources.

Task demands are an important boundary condition in assessing goal orientation effects and different approaches to influencing task demands can produce different patterns of results (Steele-Johnson *et al*, 2000). Argyris (1998) makes the distinction between external and internal commitment to goals, the external being goals defined by others and

internal being determined by the individual's perception of importance. Each is affected by the organisational processes that, when executed, will implement the strategy.

The time allocation and skill requirements (Daft, 1999) illustrated in Chapter 5, point to the importance of execution. The clear distinction between levels of management and the unique value-added of first-line managers underscore the singular nature of the position. Furthermore, McIntryre (1999) acknowledges that one key factor for team success is focused action to accomplish specific goals related to priorities.

According to Kleinbeck & Schmidt (1990), goals are more action-oriented than an intention. They serve several purposes:

- Determine perceptual processes (selective attention);
- Direct and focus attention according to task requirements;
- Organise sequences and/or hierarchies of sub-goals;
- Help to develop new processing strategies;
- Establish memory patterns to be compared with results and feedback actions; and
- Protect activities against alternative action tendencies.

If goal commitment has important performance consequences, as predicted, then attention must also be directed to the factors that affect goal commitment (Klein *et al*, 1999).

The inconsistency between what is rewarded and what needs to be managed is clear from the differences in responses between the two populations and underscored in the

literature. Olson & Aase (2002) state that "you cannot manage what you do not measure and good measures accurately reflect program actions. Measuring perceptions at the floor level should accurately reflect program success at the strategic level. Goals disappear if not reinforced through action". Given that organisational goals are set at upper levels, the question is raised as to what extent the nature of goals should reflect the value added of the individual in the possibility to influence the outcomes, or should the focus be placed on the end results? A difference in management values, as it affects the choice of goals, is clearly present. Such differences are further explored as the results are interpreted *in toto*.

The results of this study show statistically significant differences between the Canadian and Japanese responses. Perceptual differences do exist and, as such, there are several implications. Even though Japanese organisations use goals extensively in their management process, the responses of Japanese first-line managers point instead to an emphasis on the means. Such results are not necessarily incongruent with the use of goals but point to the need to operationalise them by the additional step of converting such organisational goals into means over which the managers have control. Canadians are more focused on outcomes and personal considerations. The goals verbalised by the two populations point to different values or criteria.

Both the boss's and personal expectations needed to be ascertained. It is recognised that the individual's interpretation of the boss's expectations may or may not be representative of the actual demands. However, it is deemed important to assess the differences which might exist between the interpretation of the two perspectives. The

results between Question #2 which relates to the boss's expectations and Question #8 relating to the individual's expectation, identified the same dispositions of task and personal concerns for the Canadians and of concern to energise the department by the Japanese.

14.3 SELF-EFFICACY ASSESSED BY THE NATURE OF THE TRAINING NEEDS

The individuals' perception of having the skills and capabilities required for the position and the work environment is one of the four key elements of the Generic Performance Model (Section 3.7) in the form of self-efficacy. Affecting goals (VandeWalle *et al*, 2001) and actual performance, whether directly or indirectly (Phillips & Gully, 1997; Renn & Fedor, 2001), the responses to Question #3 in relation to training needs when appointed to the position can then be viewed as not only an indication of skills/experience requirements but also as an insight on goals and performance. A review of the findings is provided, and then compared with existing literature pertinent to the topic followed by the implications in relation to the associated managerial processes.

14.3.I Review of the Findings Related to Training Needs

Four clusters emerged from the mapping process with fairly equal response rates one of which expressed that no specific needs were felt. Areas of general management principles and discipline-oriented topics indicate that some training needs are uniformly felt by both groups of respondents. Significant statistical differences emerged regarding people management, where Canadians more readily acknowledge their need for people management skills compared to their Japanese counterparts (Table 14.6). This could be

attributed to the differing management practices discussed in Section 5.4 and Appendix A. This further illustrates the influence of company practices whereby, having received less training in the management of human resources, Canadians should be expected to identify such a need. In an environment which puts as a priority its human capital, one would expect a greater attention for human resources and a lower propensity by first-line managers to identify that aspect as an area of need, as is the case for the Japanese.

What Training Do You Wish You Had in Preparation For This Position?

	Canada	Japan
Areas of Training	**%**	**%**
No Specific Needs/blank	27	28
General Management Principles	28	29
Discipline-oriented Topics	21	24
People Management	26	13

Table 14.6 Question #3: Major Training Needs Clusters

Further analysis of the data with redefined clusters shows that Canadians ask for greater administrative skills whilst the Japanese seek better people development skills (Table 14.7). The need to learn more about the inner workings of the department by the Japanese in order to be of more help contrasts with the Canadians' need for experiential knowledge such as mentoring and OJT; this highlights the differences between the two groups. Furthermore, the outward-looking perspectives of the Japanese is without equivalent for the Canadians. The observed differences may be due to the differences in management practices generally acknowledged in the literature (Inohara, 1990, 1991; Lorriman & Kenjo, 1996).

What Traioing Do You Wish You Had in Preparation For This Position?		
	Canada	Japan
Skills Requirements	**%**	**%**
Administration	31	10
Experiential Knowledge	10	4
Department Specific Knowledge	2	9
People Development	0	7
Outward Looking Perspective	1	10

Table 14.7 Question #3: Major Skills Requirements Clusters

The Canadians show a greater need in the area of experiential skills in contrast to the Japanese whose needs are met by their respective organisations. Yet the Japanese managers seek greater expertise to further help their departments, indicating a greater drive and awareness to enhance subordinates' abilities and continual improvement, *kaizen*. These findings can be attributed to the difference in practices in developing human resources and, more specifically, management skills.

14.3.2 The Findings Related to Training Needs Compared with the Literature

The difference in perceived skill needs is confirmed by other research acknowledging the skill deficiency in the area of people management skills of Western managers (Cole, 1979; Juran, 1981; Lorriman & Kenjo, 1996; Morris *et al*, 1998). Lloyd (2000) acknowledges that supervisors' level of skill is poor and that their work experience, if not incestuous due to the limited nature of their experience, is very limited. These results become more crucial when the responses to Question #4, which deals with job frustrations, show that close to 40% of Canadians express the need for better interaction with their subordinates compared to 20% for their Japanese counterparts. Skilled

interpersonal skills are integral to an environment where individuality and lower group cohesion exists.

These findings can be best illustrated by two different models. In the Japanese case, the progression of a leader is a continuous spiral (Appendix A) which includes a combination of training programmes (Figure 14.1). The importance placed on developing human resources at every level of the organisation is very much centred on the active role of seniors in developing juniors. With each year's experience, individuals are training as well as being trained. While first-line managers' ranks are filled mostly with individuals with ten years' experience on average, they have, in virtually all cases, been continuously subject to OJT, including the art of managing people.

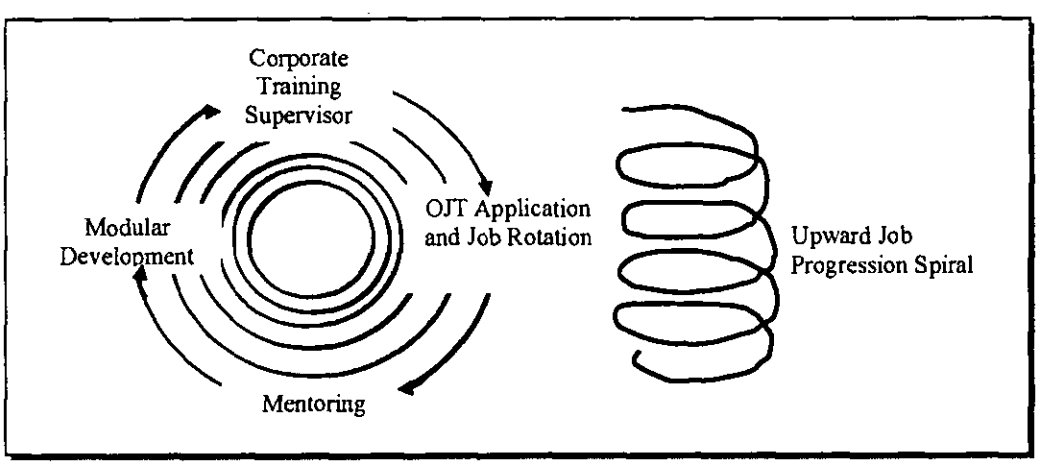

Figure 14.1 Continual Human Development of Japanese Corporations

Figure 14.1 illustrates how all aspects of employee development are a continual process. Using job rotation, mentoring, OJT as well as corporate courses, each level in the organisation is imbued in the management concepts deemed crucial by the organisation. The net result is that the common corporate culture, thought process, values and practices

are reinforced continuously at every level of the organisation. OJT is a refrain continuously heard in Japan. It relates to the interaction with the *senpai* and the application of principles learned through company training programmes. During a discussion about the characteristics of a good supervisor with a senior, well-known Japanese consultant, Mr. Kawabe, who is mentioned in Mr. Taichi Ohmo's Toyota Production System, he referred to the 7-5-3 rule that is: "You show seven ways for the subordinate to improve his performance, five areas of praise and three areas where the individual's performance leaves much to be desired. In other words, fifteen points are to be covered during the course of the day". It is clear from such a statement that a Japanese manager invests effort and time in the successful development of his subordinates. The application of such a technique requires both training and practice.

In the Western context, such an approach might mean that the individual is left to his/her own devices to find out through experience (O'Reilly & Wyatt, 1994; Farnham, 1996). In the Canadian case, the implicit assumption is that individuals have the personal responsibility of developing their own skills through a variety of means, including capitalising on changes either within or outside the company (Morin, 1996; Stewart, 1995).

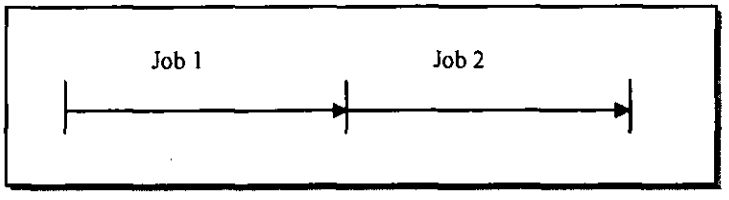

Figure 14.2 **Linear, Autarchic Skill Development**

The sequence and continuity of training between jobs is arguably non-existent in most cases (Figure 14.2). As a result, the training of individuals is, in many cases, left unstructured and unplanned. It is autarchic because of the self-sufficiency and independence of individuals in choosing to develop or not, and the type and nature of development. It is linear and fragmented because each experience and development may be incoherent, thus making each job disconnected with the net result being that the whole organisation and its levels of management lack a common language and thrust.

The need for the deliberate, intentional development of first-line managers being critical to the implementation of various endeavours (Pfeffer, 1999; McKinsey, 1999a) is broadly acknowledged. Yet, with the high rate of turnover in job changes from company to company, little effort is made by most corporations to develop all employees, at all levels, in a comprehensive way. Most merely assess the suitability of the person for the position, based upon the individual's past track record. There is very little provision made for helping the employee to 'grow' into the position.

14.3.3 Implications of the Findings Related to Training Needs

From the nature of goals being verbalised, priorities are implied. These priorities reflect fundamental sets of values, which, if applied consistently across all aspects of management, should be observed in the training needs/self-efficacy responses of first-line managers. High value placed upon human capital should lead to investments in the development of human resources. Goals should also reflect, in some way, this concern. On the other hand, low value placed on human capital would arguably be construed as a

consumptible. Conversely, low verbalisation of training needs in the development of human resources could be construed as a resultant of prior investments, or vice versa.

These two diverging perspectives are characteristic of the results of the two sampled populations. These fundamental differences are illustrated in Table 14.8.

	Canada	Japan
Assumption of Responsibility	Personal	Corporate
Corporate Perception of Needs	Task Dimensional	Multi-Dimensional
Form of Corporate Involvement	Refund on Courses in some cases	Planning "whole person" development
Career Planning Horizon	Autarchic	Continual Process
Dissemination of Corporate Values	By Osmosis	By Corporate Training

Table 14.8 Management Skills Training Comparison

As can be seen, the responses address fundamental, individual and corporate sets of values for each population; they are a reflection of different expectations and for experiential knowledge. The Canadian responses reflect a lack of preparation, which is a reflection of corporate values that assume that such preparation is the personal responsibility of individuals. Kanter (1991) acknowledges that the responsibility to give shape to a career is placed on the individuals. Griffin (2003) acknowledges "the need to turn out leaders that understand how to engage employees," is in contrast to the actual situation which exists in the workplace, "Most organisations struggle with leadership development. They promote their top performers into management roles, put them through a few workshops and seminars, and then throw them to the wolves." Leitch *et al* (1996) comment on the "inappropriate way of equipping managers with the skills which they need to cope with the organisational problems which they face daily." Even when the individual is employed by a very large corporation, few courses are offered in-house

on company time; most such courses are to be taken on the individual's own time. The career planning horizon shows no long term outlook nor continuity (Lieber, 1996; Stewart, 1996). Moreover, the task orientation reflected in the goals further underscores the priorities on task outcomes as compared to people development. It seems that learning is assumed to take place.

In the Japanese context, the whole process of personal development is seen as a corporate responsibility (Appendix A). Corporate support includes in-house and correspondence courses as well as OJT to be combined with job rotation by design. There is a continuity in the development of the individual; the values/practices of the corporation are ingrained throughout these programmes which address the development of the "whole person". The theme of these training programmes is continuously reinforced and dovetailed between the levels of the organisation.

It would be inappropriate to attribute these differences to national cultures. More appropriately, these are corporate choices. Schulz *et al* (2001), in their case study of Sunflower Electric Power Corporation, point out that organisational and leadership development are not events, but an essential part of the ongoing business. Furthermore, it is a responsibility shared by everyone, from upper management to supervisors. Sonsino (2003) relates how Rabobank, of the Netherlands, uses a 28-month program for potential managers, recognising that core competence is related to people development.

In the productivity/performance context, these types of corporate values and practices are indicative of deeper convictions. "One dimension of the contemporary reconceptualisation of management work is the turn to competency" (du Gay & Salaman, 1996). Hitt *et al* (1998) state, that in order to build strategic flexibility and a competitive advantage in the 21st century, requires dynamic core competencies, a focus and development of human capital, through the development of culture which is learning and innovative. Day (2001) states that "Leadership emerges with the process of creating shared meaning, both in terms of *sensemaking* and in terms of *value-added*". "The learning company as an orientation, not an activity, as a purpose and a process not an outcome, as becoming not being and as a journey not an archetypical destination" (Leitch *et al*, 1996) underscores a different mind set. Each of these elements implies the need for effective managers, which, in turn, implies that they have been adequately prepared to meet the challenges and expectations.

14.4 ENVIRONMENTAL CHARACTERISTICS IDENTIFIED BY FIRST-LINE MANAGERS AS AFFECTING PERFORMANCE

The Generic Performance Model embodies influence of factors, external to the individual, such as national and corporate culture (Kopelman *et al*, 1990), organisational characteristics (Kopelman, 1986), moderators (Locke & Latham, 1990), industry (Lincoln & Kalleberg, 1990) as well as organisational practices and climate (Lincoln & Kalleberg, 1990; Kopelman *et al*, 1990). Three questions, namely #4 "What are typical frustrations to your job?", #6 "What are problems that, if they went away, would greatly improve your performance?" and #7 "What problems if they went away, would improve your department's performance?" deal with frustrations and problems akin to individual

and departmental performance; they explore the various factors encapsulated under the rubric of environmental characteristics. While the three questions explore the area of problems and frustrations, the attributed source varies from typical frustrations, to respondent's own and departmental performance.

14.4.1 Review of the Findings Related to Environment Characteristics

The stated three questions provide the respondents with the opportunity to identify areas which they perceive as affecting performance. While the responses to each question were tabulated and mapped independently of the others, the process yielded six major concerns verbalised by first-line managers (Table 14.9).

Concerns	Question #4 Typical Frustrations		Question #6 What Problems Affect Own Performance		Question #7 What Problems Affect Department Performance	
	Canada	Japan	Canada	Japan	Canada	Japan
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Work-related	25	16	16	20	3	7
Operational issues	18	5	29	21	*33	27
Policies and procedures	21	10	16	20	≈17	21
Management interaction	23	30	16	24	^8	8
Interdepartmental issues	22	8	12	6	7	5
Subordinates related	39	20	25	19	~28	31

*Resource related/operational issues/Work climate
~ O.B. factors/quality of subordinates
≈ Organisational structure bureaucracy planning
^ Boss interface Recognition

Table 14.9 Frequency Distribution of Areas Affecting Performance

The preponderance of these areas deals with human factors and interaction with management and subordinates as well as interdepartmentally. The Canadian first-line managers clearly identify the nature of interaction and motivation of subordinates as an area of difficulty. When the responses dealing with goals were analysed, no such concern

was expressed about the development of, or interaction with, subordinates. It is rather intriguing that such a major area of difficulty and great need would not be acknowledged in the form of goals. One could conclude that such concerns are not part of the values and culture of the organisation and the respondents. The Japanese, on the other hand, because of their extensive corporate development programs (Appendix A), were relatively silent in this area. Such a difference in training needs underscores distinct management philosophies and values. These same patterns are found in the responses to these three questions.

Because of the phenomenological nature of the research, the data does not readily lend itself to statistical analysis. However, by using the average number of responses for each cluster as a criteria, responses of a greater frequency were identified by a + sign (Figure 14.10). The percentage of responses over the average for a given question and population are also shown for reference purposes. The results indicate, as was shown in previous sections, a greater concern by Canadians for subordinate related issues, while the Japanese are more concerned about management interaction.

	Canada			Japan		
	Question #4	Question #6	Question #7	Question #4	Question #6	Question #7
Concerns	Typical Frustrations	What Problems Affect Own Performance	What Problems Affect Department Performance	Typical Frustrations	What Problems Affect Own Performance	What Problems Affect Department Performance
Work-related						
Operational issues		+ 53%	+ 100%			+ 63%
Policies and procedures						
Management interaction				+ 100%	+ 33%	
Inter-Departmental issues						
Subordinates related	+ 50%	+ 31%	+ 84%			+ 88%

Table 14.10 Cluster With Higher Response Rates

In addition, to a lesser extent, difficulties emerged directly related to operational issues which affect the department. These include the lack of resources, policies, procedures and management interaction. Operational issues may not be as controllable by the individual manager and are clearly attributed to affecting the department. As previously mentioned, the area of management interaction is a concern for Japanese first-line managers.

14.4.2 The Findings Related to Environmental Characteristics Compared with the Literature

The findings parallel those expounded by Herzberg (1987, 1991, 1993) as dissatisfiers. When the clusters dealing with policies and procedures are combined with management interaction and considered across all three questions, they form the largest of the clusters for both populations. The subordinates-related cluster shows a high response for both

populations, markedly higher when departmental performance is considered as compared to personal performance. Similarly, the quality of management interaction is a more pronounced constraint for the person than for the department. These findings are not unexpected as these concerns can be more a reflection on one's ability than on the performance of the department. Comparing these responses to the environmental factors proffered by various studies, the perspective of first-line managers is much more narrowly focused around their own activities and on those of the department.

The Japanese express a need with respect to their interaction with management. The long decision chain and consensus process become a cost as decisions, which could be considered as within the realm of one's responsibilities, are delayed; this frustration is reflected in the responses. The other side of the coin is that the work climate and interdepartmental interaction shows a much lower level of frustration on the part of the Japanese, as compared to their Canadian counterparts.

14.4.3 Implications of the Findings Related to Environmental Characteristics

The responses indicate a concern on the part of the first-line managers for factors closely related to their work environment. Broad issues, such as the economy and industry practices, were not raised as primary areas of concern. The importance of the working relationship with subordinates on the part of Canadians is again very visible. For them, the human-related issues seem to be more predominant, and underscore their need to develop people management skills. Interaction with management is a concern for both

populations. Operational issues, such as resources availability and work-related issues, do not exclusively capture the spotlight.

The implications on the productivity/performance and the Generic Performance Model are several fold.

1) The first-line managers' areas of concern are focused to the realm of their operation.

2) Many of the environmental variables identified in the various productivity models are beyond the control of the managers. However, all of the various factors identified by first-line managers are within the scope of the management team.

3) While the focus for Canadians is on subordinates and the primary concern for the Japanese is on management interactions, the dimensionality of these factors also extend beyond these individuals' realm of influence and are a reflection of key corporate practices such as hiring, management decision processes and empowerment.

These findings underscore the need to manage, at every level of the organisation, the development and training in the area of human interactions. Such emphasis will enhance efforts in improving productivity/performance.

14.5 ASPECTS OF RECOGNITION/FEEDBACK ACKNOWLEDGED BY FIRST-LINE MANAGERS

The last component of the Generic Performance Model to be discussed is recognition/feedback. The combination of goals and feedback are continuously used in tandem as one appears meaningless without the other. From the literature survey, it seems that recognition/feedback can serve a number of purposes ranging from

motivational concerns (Robbins & Langton, 1999) to self-assessment (Renn & Fedor, 2001). Three Questions, #5, #9 and #10 provide insights on the respondents' perspectives.

14.5.1 Review of Findings Related to Recognition/Feedback

The recognition dimension of the Model is addressed explicitly by Question #9 which explores how first-line managers expect their performance will be recognised and, implicitly, by Question #5 which asks the respondents to identify gratifying moments. The responses to Question #10 examine the factors that would make the job fantastic. It is clear that Question #9 seeks to identify the external sources of acknowledgement while gratifying moments can be viewed either externally driven or as a sense of personal accomplishment. The stated questions do not explore the actual corporate practices, such as teams tracking their own performance and organisations providing platforms to recognise improvements (Grief, 1999), but limit themselves to the respondents' perceptions. For ease of interpretation, Table 14.10 provides a tabulation of the responses to all three questions.

	QUESTION #5 GRATIFYING MOMENTS		QUESTION #9 PERFORMANCE RECOGNITION		QUESTION #10 WHAT WOULD MAKE THIS JOB FANTASTIC	
	TABLE 13.4		TABLE 13.8		TABLE 12.9	
	CANADA	JAPAN	CANADA	JAPAN	CANADA	JAPAN
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Personal	13	3	8	11	12	10
Job Content						
Creativity			12	21	7	17
Sense of accomplishment					7	17
Outcome-oriented					3	15
Additional duties					4	10
Total					**21**	**59**
Managerial interface					12	20
Corporate Practices						
Organisational climate					8	5
Communications					3	7
Corporate support					10	1
Total					**21**	**13**
Subordinates			5	7	6	8
Nothing/Blank			20	12	28	7
Recognition						
Performance review			15	0		
Recognition in kind	4	3	36	21		
Recognition from others	42	23	44	16		
Recognition overall	46	26				
Subordinates	36	15				
Total	**128**	**67**	**95**	**37**		
Self-assessment	59	90	8	11		
Lack of Recognition			35	6		
Job Related						
Plan	4	23				
Challenge	11	12				
Outcome	37	49	15	34		
Total	**52**	**84**				
Customers			8	3		

Table 14.11 Positive Elements of the Position

For Question #9, the largest Canadian response cluster areas include commendation from others and recognition in kind, namely, financial rewards; however, the largest Japanese response relates to personal satisfaction of seeing the end results. One interesting difference between the two national groups is that Canadians state that recognition will come from periodic performance reviews. It is difficult to interpret this statistic when it is well known that Japanese corporations conduct evaluations on a regular basis and, hence, the lack of response in this area may be due to the fact that the review process is so ingrained or perfunctory as well as generic (Inohara, 1990; Whitehill, 1991; Itoh, 1994) that it is not perceived as a form of recognition. The results are consistent with those from previous questions which can be characterised as self-centred, short-term, public recognition versus group centred, long-term and unassuming. Once again, the responses are consistent with the management values and practices encountered in both countries.

For Question #10, the largest single response for the Canadians is that they are already motivated, dwarfing any other response. However, the Japanese do not exhibit such a single large response, and when the mapping procedure is applied to the data, they show a stronger desire for a sense of accomplishment. Creativity, additional duties and results could all be combined under the rubric of actualisation, as propounded by Herzberg (2003). Also significant is the Japanese desire for an improved managerial interface, which relates to the need for authority and decision-making capacity. One relatively minor area for the Canadians is the need for corporate support and resources.

For Question #5, the largest number of responses, both as a single category and as a cluster, is the Japanese sense of personal accomplishment. In a diminishing number are the Canadian responses about recognition in one form or another and the quality of the working relationship with subordinates. These statistics further reinforce the findings from previous questions which underscore the focus by Canadians on the need for personal recognition, while the Japanese are introspective in the form of self assessment and the ability to influence the outcome through their plans and creativity.

Overall, the responses to the questions, considered as satisfiers, further reiterate that the source of satisfaction can be determined by the nature of the efforts being expended. "Self-appraisal is not culturally bound, in that it embodies the desire for both success and failure feedback as components of the overarching desire for diagnostic information" (Bailey & Chen, 1997). The success achieved, as a result of the efforts, should inevitably produce personal satisfaction.

14.5.2 The Findings Related to Recognition/Feedback Compared with the Literature

Each of the two populations exhibit significant differences. In terms of gratifying moments, the Canadians indicate personal recognition as important while the Japanese show a propensity for self-assessment and seek greater challenges. The latter corresponds to the satisfiers identified by Herzberg (2003) and self-assessment theories by Bandura (1989) and Bartol *et al* (2001). The juxtaposition of the responses of the two populations underscores the differences in sources of motivation and managerial values. The nature of the Japanese responses in the perception and treatment of employees and

the role of first-line managers is not unique to Japan but can be observed in certain transplants, like Toyota, and in non-Japanese corporations, such as Wal-Mart and Synovus (Fortune, 2002; Synovus.com, 2002).

14.5.3 Implication of the Findings Related to Recognition/Feedback

The availability of feedback as well as categories of recognition fostered by organisations are readily manifested by the types of responses observed. It seems that the results of the two populations are consistent with the goals being propounded. They support the observation by Deming; he asserts that results obtained are more a function of the managerial process and practices in place than variances and choices induced by individuals (Aguayo, 1991).

The implications are several fold. In Section 13.2.3; dealing specifically with performance recognition clusters, 35% of Canadians indicated a lack of expectation to be recognised, as compared to productivity models which advocate such recognition. The Japanese management practices, for this level of management advocate team contribution (Lorriman & Kenjo, 1996; Inohara, 1991; Itoh, 1994). In such an environment, individuals are more introspective. These two samples when compared to the theory characterised by Herzberg (2003) identifies two forms of motivators, achievement and recognition. Under the Japanese system the performance is duly noted (Itoh, 1994) but public recognition is only for team not individual effort. The satisfaction derived from the knowledge that the results are a matter of record (Inohara, 1991) provides some satisfaction compared to the Canadian resignation that no form is even present. This

implies that there must be consistency between promulgated and actual practices such as under the Japanese responses, and that contradiction between the talk and the walk of the Canadian responses undermines the credibility of the management system.

A corollary to these observations is that the more visible, transparent, and consistent is the system in displaying performance, individuals can make their own assessment of progress and, thus, self-actualize. The use of notices and visual communications (Mestre, *et al,* 2000) further enhance productivity/performance by implicitly providing some form of recognition.

14.6 THE INHERENT CHARACTERISTICS OF THE MODEL

This section reviews the inherent characteristics of the model in light of the findings discussed in the previous sections. These are – the holistic nature of the process; values, the common denominator; and the dynamics and interactive nature of the various factors.

14.6.I Holistic Process Ascertained by the Responses

In the previous sections, the responses to the questions dealing with each of the elements of the Generic Performance Model have been reviewed as distinct areas. This section explores the following question: are the responses to the various questions providing any kind of insight as to the nature of the dynamics or relationships between the various elements of the Generic Performance Model? Or, stated in another way, is the model composed of the sum or aggregate of the various elements or, are the various elements part of a whole? The distinction is that in the first case, the parts form a sum and are

contiguous to one another, while in the second, the parts are inextricably intertwined to form a whole. The phenomenological nature of this research makes it such that the data does not lend itself to rigorous statistical analysis. However, the commonality of topics found through the tabulation and mapping process indicate a consistency and continuity in underlying tenets which would imply some higher order of rationale beyond the individual responses.

In the discussion of various models (Chapter 3), one distinctive feature beyond the various elements they utilise, is the nature of the interaction. Three basic alternatives were being proffered. One, such as the economic models, is a collection of independent variables which interact to various degrees; a second alternative is a more sequential, cause-and-effect model which defines more deliberately the nature of interaction between the sequence of the various elements; the third type is symbiotic models defined by the convoluted interaction between a large number of elements. An analysis of the various questions reveals a consistency in theme. Such concurrence would lead one to conclude that the relationship between the various elements is more than an aggregation or sequential arrangement of variables, it is one of a symbiotic relationship. The implications are that if the answer is that the model is the resultant of the sum of the parts, each of the various elements can be tackled as stand alones. If on the other hand, the implications are that the model is symbiotic, a more comprehensive perspective is needed where management practices are considered.

The data shows that Canadians exhibit a strong tendency to set goals as an end-point, short-term outcome/task, combined with the longing to be personally attributed the credit for the results. They indicate a lack of training in the people management area and the desire for personal recognition. By the nature of their training needs, the Canadians implicitly acknowledge the lack of interpersonal skills. Conversely, responses by subordinates (Herzberg, 2003), declare their frustration with their supervisors, thus acknowledging the same problem of inadequacy of their boss's. This lack can be construed either as an individual shortcoming or as a corporate omission. Hence, the nature of the training needs can be a reflection of serious voids in the basic preparation of individuals or a reflection of changing times and demands. The training deficiency of Canadian managers represents scarcity of preparation, not dependent on current events. Furthermore, the first-line managers' perspective can be indicative of a blind spot, as indicated by the lack of acknowledgement in the form of goals. The recognition sought by Canadians is consistent with the nature of the goals they identified. Personal goals also translate into personal recognition. Correspondingly, self-effacing, and means-oriented goals translate into the self-satisfaction of achieving the results. These results demonstrate a rationale which underlie the responses to the various questions.

The Japanese, on the other hand, indicate a strong emphasis on the means and more specifically on their subordinates' abilities and the improvement of the effectiveness of their department. They endeavour to further increase their personal understanding of departmental activities and seek greater challenges and responsibilities. Their sense of satisfaction is driven by the knowledge of the results. These individual findings concur

with the literature descriptive of the respective management practices of the two populations (Whitehill, 1991; Lorriman & Kenjo, 1996). Similarly, while the Japanese responses are quite different from their Canadian counterparts, the congruence between the responses to the various questions for that population underscore further an underlying rationale.

Taken in conjunction with the whole of the responses, there are several points worth noting. Given the extensive use of metrics and targets in Japanese plants, the Japanese first-line managers should have responded with the very specific, quantifiable goals which are normally prominently displayed in their work area. Instead, their replies reflect general responsibilities and behaviour typical of the position. This implies that the targets are not 'theirs' to achieve and that their contribution is to have their team so organised and efficient that the goals will be met (Inohara, 1991). It can be assumed that the lack of such responses, are a reflection of corporate practices and taken for granted. When the answers to the individual questions are assessed as a whole, the results exhibit consistency within each of the two populations. If goals, training and recognition/feedback are congruent in their focus, the net impact is an additive, if not a multiplicative effect as changes in one area engender reactions in the others when the effect is taken as a whole. The goals cited provide an insight on the priorities and values of the individual as well as those of the organisation. Moreover, the sources and types of recognition are an indication of organisational values and practices. These observations, underscore the consistency in values exhibited by the management practices of each of the two populations. Different sets of values result in different choices. These choices

then become part of the decision criteria which are characteristic of the management processes peculiar to the two populations.

The congruence between the answers to the various questions, by Canadians and Japanese respectively, demonstrates that each of the elements of the Generic Performance Model is not an independent module from which one can pick and choose the approach to be followed. Instead, the alignment of values implied by the responses of each population illustrate an intricate interaction. While the responses of the first-line managers focus on the specifics directly affecting them, the broader issues, such as values, are clearly reflected in the nature of their responses and indicate a more holistic process.

14.6.2 Values - The Common Denominator

While the answers within both the Canadian and Japanese data are unique to each population, the consistency of focus within each sample intimates that an overarching factor, namely corporate values, accounts for the congruity of responses within each population.

Schwartz (1992) defines values as desirable states, objects, goals . . . as normative standards to judge and choose among alternative modes of behaviour. Dose (1997) claims that most value theorists (Kluckholm, 1951; Rokeah, 1968, 1973; Kilmann, 1981; Schwartz & Bilsky, 1987; Agle & Caldwell, 1999) do agree. Values are standards or criteria for choosing goals or guiding actions, allowing individuals to discern what is

'right' or to assess the importance of preferences (Kluckholm, 1951; England, 1967; Rokea, 1968, 1973; Meglino *et al*, 1989). Underlying the results of the tabulation of goals, training, and recognition/feedback are the corporate values of two distinct management philosophies, as evidenced by the responses of the first-line managers.

These values are relevant to the productivity/performance process as they form the basis for opting amongst possible alternatives. The consistency is reflected in both the choices being verbalized and the nature of the factors being verbalized. For instance the focus on outcomes and personal recognition reflect one set of values, the lack of training and frustration to cope with human factors are indicative of individual accountability. On the other hand, extensive development of managerial talent reflects itself with a low incidence of frustration. Team effort and visibility of performance lead to a higher degree of supportive management. The values become the glue which brings congruency to various responses.

Work values are perceived as goals that are sought to satisfy a need. "Rather than focusing on a value system, some research has investigated individual values by measuring the importance individuals give to a particular outcome. Researchers commonly devise their own lists of outcomes; therefore, the lists are not consistent across studies. Unfortunately, this makes comparison of results across studies difficult" (Dose, 1997). In this study, the outcomes are the outgrowth of the tabulation. The importance of each of the different outcomes is a reflection of the first-line managers' responses.

The consistency between the different questions reflects a set of values unique to each of the populations.

One tendency might be to attribute the differences to the distinct national cultures from which the samples were drawn. Is it Fordism or Americanisation, Toyotaism or Japanisation (Morris *et al*, 1998; Scarbrough & Terry, 1998)? The answer relates to productivity as it frames the scope of the enigma. Toone (1994) stresses the necessity not to confuse corporate and national culture. He believes that Japanese companies have not attempted to impose Japanese culture on the British workforce; instead, they have attempted to alter their behaviour and habits. Such a stance can also be found in a number of well-known American corporations. Examples of the impact of such value shifts are illustrated by a number of corporate case studies such as Wal-Mart and Synovus (Synovus.com, 2002). Winfield (1994) relates how the management practices at Toyota UK are multi-dimensional, taking into consideration managerial processes, social/cultural considerations and a community organised to serve the common livelihood in conjunction with underlying principles of goal commitment, flexibility, adaptability and quality. According to the *Guiding Principles of Toyota* (1999), to foster corporate culture that enhances individual creativity and teamwork is a good example. "Because people make our automobiles, nothing gets started until we train and educate our people" (Toyota, 1997). Vaghefi *et al* (2000) explain that Toyota's success in institutionalising intellectual capital is the primary reason why competitors have not succeeded in catching up with the well-documented and widely-disseminated Toyota Production System.

This philosophy is not unique to such giants as Toyota. It applies also to smaller companies, such as Takagi Precision Dies, Co. Ltd. which, in practice as well as in its opening statement of the company brochure, asserts: "Our company goals include providing an enjoyable workplace for all employees. Employees are the most vital ingredient in every Takagi product" (Takagi, 1999). In the Western context, Wal-Mart claims as its first implemented tenet of Sam Walton (Walmartstores.com, 1999): "Respect for the individuals". Meglino & Ravlin (1998) state that, at the organisational level, values are viewed as a major component of organisational culture and are often described as principles responsible for the successful management of companies as well as the most distinctive property or defining characteristic of a social institution.

Each of the companies mentioned continually reinforce their culture through various events. Howard (1991) believes that a culture can be thought of as a community of individuals who see their world in a particular manner. In his review of the literature dealing with how stories are related to culture, he affirms that the essence of human thought can be found in the stories used to inform and indoctrinate as to the nature of reality. Or, as pointed out by Polkinghorne (1988), "We make our existence into a whole by understanding it as an expression of a single and developing story". LeVine (1984) defines culture as a "shared organisation of ideas that includes intellectual, moral and aesthetic standards prevalent in a community and the meaning of communicative actions. Culture represents a consensus on a wide variety of meanings among members of an interacting community". Culture is the result of consistent behaviour over time. Hoffman *et al* (2001) point out that culture is a matter of past patterns or practice. They quote Jim

Kelly, Chairman and CEO of UPS, as saying: "Ethical behaviour isn't an act but a habit. Just as good health requires cultivating the habits of getting enough sleep and eating wholesome food, Aristotle believed that right action was the result of developing good moral habits. In a business context, this means training and, at the deepest level, something we call 'corporate culture'". The uniqueness of both Toyota and Wal-Mart clearly illustrates the resolution and values that make such corporations powerhouses.

Dose (1997) implies that values are relatively easy to change according to England's value system (1967). The implication for organisational practice is that once leaders have determined the values to be sought in their members, the classification of those values, according to the work values framework, will help them establish the appropriate policy for ensuring that newcomers do, in fact, hold pivotal values. In their analysis of values on the formative team processes, Dose & Klimoski (1999) recognise that team leadership facilitates the positive effects of values along with such factors as recruitment and selection, task and task assignments, group interaction, and process management efforts to attain a more holistic outlook. Sullivan (1991) underscores the importance of managers as they supply information and feedback needed by workers, thereby making themselves advocates of the organisation's values and goals.

The actual implementation implies some form of psychological contract which is defined by the working relationship. In one case, the employee can be an agent of the firm where the employee is controlled explicitly through a written contract and direct supervision. At the other end of the spectrum, the employee has become part of a work community

and experiences implicit control through the internalisation of goals and values (Tomer, 2001).

Of particular importance, corporate values seem to foster two different types of goals. One group, as illustrated by the Canadians, fosters short-term, task/outcome emphasis which is internalised as the criteria for performance assessment and reflected in the type of recognition and feedback expected by the individual. The other group, as illustrated by the Japanese, starts on the premise that results are a function of the investment made in the process. The one variable over which first-line managers have a certain amount of discretion is in the management and development of subordinates. In order to assure a consistency in outlook, values and practices, all employees are trained in problem solving and other such concepts; first-line managers are developed and are expected to invest themselves in their subordinates. One key measure of the managers' effectiveness is their ability to meet this responsibility (Lorriman & Kenjo, 1994).

On the basis of the responses, the managerial practices are a reflection, to some extent, of the values of the organisations. The first-line managers are an integral part of forming those values. Thus the consistency in values reflected by the responses to the various questions is illustrative of the inherent values of the organisation.

14.6.3 The Dynamic and Interactive Nature of the Factors

The importance of first-line management, their focus on the various areas of the Generic Performance Model have identified their specific areas of concern, many of which relate

to the management of human relationships between superiors, peers and subordinates and the dilemma between personal and organisational outlook, the focus on the end or the means. The values providing the underpinning to these observations have been discussed as the glue which helps rationalise the congruence of the responses. Values, to be consequential, need to be expressed in operational terms. This last area of discussion is the dynamic nature of the interactions, usually referred to as Performance Management as the characterisation of the process.

The complexity of productivity/performance management is acknowledged as a systematic approach (Mwita, 2000), the result in investment in technology, workforce's ability and culture (Longenecker *et al*, 1998), with a long chain of activities starting in such areas as recruiting and training. Pfeffer (2001) declares that high performance work practices require major up-front investment in such areas as recruiting and training, underscoring the long chain of interrelationships. Spangenberg & Theron (2001) state that, "By definition, Performance Management generally includes performance planning, i.e. goal setting, ongoing coaching and development of subordinates, formally reviewing and rewarding performance". Moreover, Wood (1999) affirms that a "theme underlying all versions of high-performance management is the synergy between a set of managerial practices: hence the need for researchers to treat practices as systems". Each of these descriptions serves to illustrate the need to have a model which reflects a continual ongoing process. While the results provide a snapshot at a period in time, the responses reflect an extended time dimension covering events preceding the survey and past

practices as well as expectations for the future. As such the model needs to reflect the state of flux which is characteristic of the work environment.

However, while the survey was conducted in Canada and Japan, the challenge to achieve higher levels of performance is not limited to these two countries. Experts, in such countries as New Zealand (Rabey, 1997) and South Africa (Spangenberg & Theron, 2001), share the concern about the discrepancies between theory, expectations and practices (Becker & Gerhart, 1996).

Therefore, when the root-cause of performance is explored, the eventual lowest common denominator is found at the individual unit level, with its primary choreographer being the first-line manager. The exploration of the various elements in the Generic Performance Model has helped to clarify the constructs and values which are fundamental to performance, based upon these managers' perspectives.

14.7 MODIFYING THE MODEL TO REFLECT THE FINDINGS

While the factors of goals, self-efficacy/training needs, recognition/feedback as well as environmental characteristics have been ascertained, the holistic nature of the process, the underlying presence of values and the dynamic and interactive nature of these various factors require some enhancements to the model. These two aspects have been added to the original model to reflect the findings and interpretation of the data.

14.7.1 Values as Part of the Model

At the core of the responses is a set of values implied by the data and corroborated by the literature. The actual content of the responses indicates that the scope or sphere of attention of first-line managers is very much a reflection of differing management philosophies. The contrast between a focus on an end point, as compared to the means to reach the desired outcome, is also found in the goal literature. This dichotomy is best illustrated by the General Electric Corporation where the combination of 'six sigma' emphasis, enhancing the financial value added, while short-term financial performance are verbalised at the corporate level (Byrnes *et al*, 2002; Fox, 2002) and conveyed to the lowest levels of the organisation. These differences in perspective are illustrative of differing sets of corporate values. According to Stainer & Stainer (1996), values underpin decision making. A value-based approach can provide a common structure for socially responsible organisations in their analysis of performance and productivity management. Based upon the responses, it seems that corporate values induce a certain focus of goals which, in turn, actuate the choice of instrument. These will yield certain outcomes which are meant to meet the needs engendered by the initial set of values, as illustrated by the Goal focus circle (Figure 14.3).

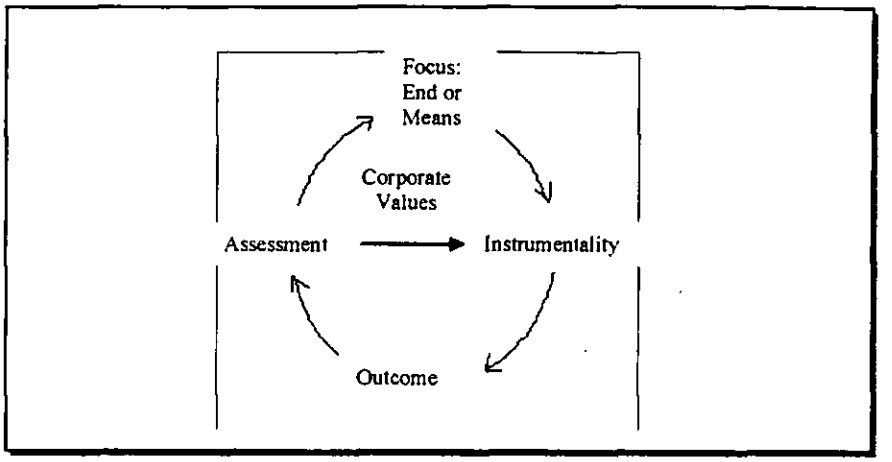

Figure 14.3 Goal Focus Circle - Cause and Effect

If the values chosen are to meet short-term financial objectives (Fox, 2002), the short-term actions with financial implications become the instrument to achieve the desired outcome (Colley *et al,* 2001). If, on the other hand, results are seen as the outcome of daily activities, the focus is then placed on the means. The term instrumentality is used in the content of means employed, agent or tool (Webster, 1984) and not, as Vroom (1964) defines it, as outcome-leading to outcome. Hence, the elements chosen to produce the desired end-results become key. In the case of first-line managers, this implies that actions directed to influence human resources performance represent the instrument over which they have control and they can affect. Stewart (1996) questions the use of corporate value statements in which nobody believes. Values that make sense are values people will believe; they are words to live by and provide a way to decide, everyday. Corporate values help define the choice of focus and the instrumentality which will be used in order to achieve results. The contrast between the two populations in this study illustrates the congruence in the responses once the set of values is chosen (Table 14.11).

	Focus	Iostrumentality	Outcomes	Corporate Value System
Canadian	Short-term results[1, 2]	Expediting	Deadlines/volume achievement	Immediate outcomes
Japanese	Means [2]	Subordinates Methods	Facilitating	Permanent solution and Continual improvements

Source: [1]Shank (1995), [2]Kurtzman (1996)

Table 14.12 Comparison of Japanese and Canadian Management Values

As can be seen, Canadians focus on the short-term results which translate into a role of expediting and meeting deadlines and volume requirements, all being driven by the value of meeting short-term expectations. The Japanese show a focus on the means, which implies facilitating the performance of subordinates and executing continual improvement in order to assure consistent performance and progress over time.

14.7.2 Dynamic and Interactive Relationships

To illustrate the interactive and continuous changing conditions, the model was modified by changing from linear relationships to concentric circles (Figure 14.4). This type of model can be found in ethnography (Spradley, 1989, 1990; Rousseau, 1990). At the core are values and each moving outward circle displays the extensive interactions between the various components. The goals remain the end to be pursued, and the instruments represent the means such as training.

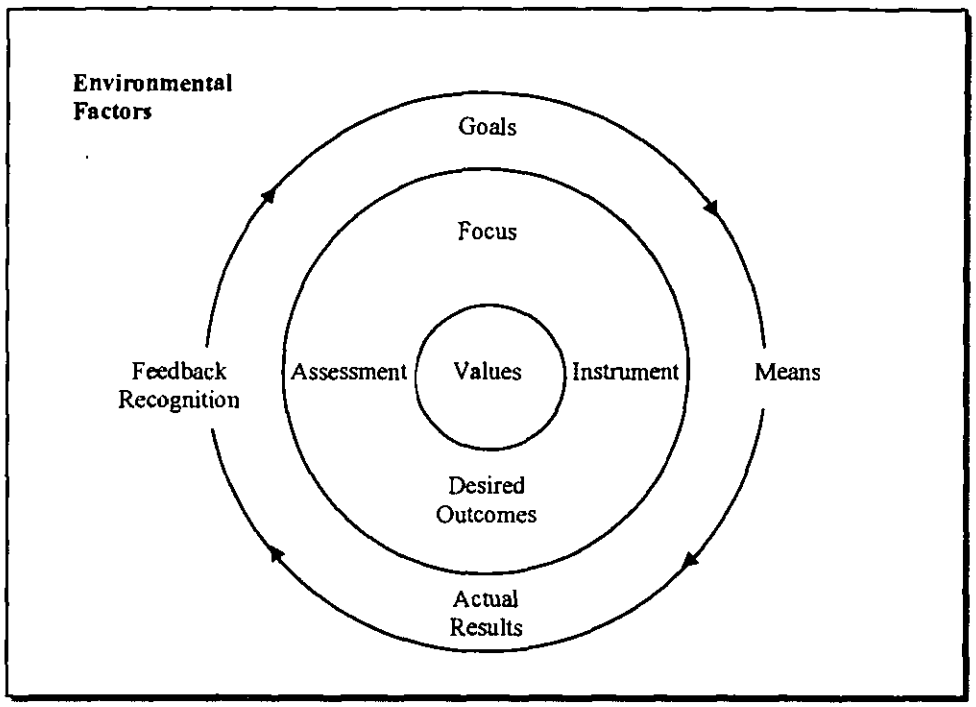

Figure 14.4 Symbiotic Aspects of the Generic Performance Model

These values are then reflected in the choice of focus or purpose which is made operational in the form of goals. The choice of instrument to reach the desired outcomes is then mirrored by the actions being taken. The desired outcomes, when compared to actual outcomes and goals, lead, in turn, to feedback and recognition. For example, from the data, one can deduce that the Japanese chose to develop subordinates, one of the instruments selected is training, the value is recognising the importance of human assets. In contrast, for the Canadians, the means is deadlines and the instrument may be schedules and to expedite, the implied value is a task orientation devoid of the appreciation of human assets. All of the elements of the Generic Performance Model are represented in the outward circle. The inner circle conceptualises the broad means and at the core are the values which underscore and provide the consistency throughout.

The relevance of the first-line managers' skills in understanding the department's inner-workings in the areas of human behaviour and the process of departmental tasks is key, in an environment which needs individuals to contribute to the best of their ability within a harmonious work climate. Such observations have to be taken into the total context. The secret of a great chef is not only to follow the recipe but to adapt to the existing conditions.

The applicability of the model is not limited to the findings from Canada and Japan. For example, the commitment to develop employees is not restricted to Japan and is seen very much as a focus of the Government of Singapore (Tho, 1999). Likewise, such a drive is not limited to large companies; Small and Medium-Size Enterprises (SMEs) provide resources to be able to avail themselves of the same level of expertise (Productivity and Standards Board, 2000a). Funds have also been provided to industry to implement productivity programmes (Productivity and Standards Board, 2000b). Similar to the Japanese practice, the Productivity and Standards Board has developed modules to train all levels of the organisation in the skills to provide OJT (Productivity and Standards Board, 2000c). Such efforts have not gone unrecognised. The World Academy for Productivity Science (WAPS) and the Asian Productivity Organisation (APO) have conferred honours on the Productivity and Standards Board for contributions to productivity improvements, both regionally and internationally (Productivity and Standards Board, 1999).

One of the seven key elements evaluated in the Baldridge National Quality Programme relates to the Human Resources area in terms of work systems, employee education training, development and employee well-being as well as satisfaction. The first two are of particular interest as they directly relate to this research, as revealed by the question posed by Baldridge National Quality Programme, (2000): "How do your managers and supervisors encourage and motivate employees to develop and utilise their full potentials?". To be successful, and not least to be able to access and exploit new technology, firms need an educated and trained workforce and appropriate management capabilities (OECD, 1998).

These examples serve to illustrate the symbiotic interaction between values, instruments such as training in the search for productivity/performance and that such efforts are pursued on a global scale.

14.8 IN SUMMARY

The nature of goals can take a number of forms dependent on the respondent and his/her underlying values. Japanese corporations do extensively utilise goal setting and provide feedback, in some cases on a real-time basis. Therefore, the impact of such practices should be reflected in the nature of goals verbalised by Japanese first-line managers in terms of very specific, quantified, result-oriented goals. Instead, their responses indicate an emphasis on the means to meet targets. From the data, it is felt that a distinction must be made between the level of output to be achieved, which could be labelled as target or quota, and the activities or processes used to meet these quantified objectives.

Conversely, Canadians concentrate on the ends to be met. Thus, the term goal, as defined in the way it is being used, can refer to means or ends to be accomplished. Evidence is presented which supports either definition.

The results of goal research reveal that the means used in the implementation of goals had very much an impact on the end results. When assessing these, research shows that it is necessary to also ascertain the way the 'targets' were selected and implemented. Self-efficacy research also demonstrates the importance of the context and means in which goals are set. The dependency on supervisory skills has also proved that the means greatly influence the results. Both the time allocation and skills employed clarify the importance of means on performance. Goals, based upon the results of the tabulations as well as on the findings in the literature, are more than a mere statistic; they assume their full meaning when the process surrounding their use is considered. As such, an aspect of goals should relate to the unique value-added of the position.

If results are to be achieved by and through people, first-line managers should be adequately prepared to meet the challenges. However, a lack of skills affects not only the effectiveness of the supervisor, but also the relationship between subordinates and superior, consequently affecting performance. If such skills are not acquired at the lower levels, the problem is further acerbated as individuals progress in the organisation, thus seriously limiting the ability to improve and eventually to compete.

The populations surveyed illustrate two distinct philosophies: (1) One assumes that individuals have or will acquire, on their own, the necessary skills, while the other undertakes to train employees as a matter of responsibility. The Canadians show that such an assumption may be a false premise. The data shows that their lack of training is an impediment. Furthermore, when each individual can develop his/her own set of values and practices, this may lead to a fragmented approach and a variety of standards within the organization. (2) Effort must be exercised to resolutely train employees and supervisors alike in the management philosophy and practices of the organization in order to assume consistency in practices, and the skill levels or outlook of individuals. The results clearly show that Japanese managers, unlike their Canadian counterparts, rarely express needs in fundamental skills required to interact with subordinates; these can be directly attributed to corporate managerial practices. Feedback and recognition exhibit the same dichotomy between the Canadians seeking personal recognition for achieving the end results, as compared to the personal satisfaction of the Japanese in the knowledge of the results and the success of the team. These findings are consistent with the goals expressed by the two populations.

As a whole, this research shows that corporate values and practices influence first-line managers' views of goals and the entire performance management process. The fundamental difference is captured by Mr. Inamori (1995), founder of Kyocera Corporation, who states that "If your motivation and methods are virtuous, you need not worry much about results". The main difference between the two populations lies in the way first-line managers perceive their roles as either expeditors or facilitators; the source

of this difference is in the espoused set of values. The interaction between the different elements of the model also suggests that the decision is not one of 'pick and choose' but is one that requires a comprehensive approach which starts with the recruitment and selection of employees and the continual process of developing human resources in the ways of the corporation, with communication, feedback and recognition being part of the equation. As in the case of Synovus (2002) the issue is not one of national culture, but one of choice of values by management.

It is the use of phenomenological research with open-ended questions that has provided evidence of the differences in perspectives between Canada and Japan. The evidence suggests the need for a broader concept of goals, such as making the marked distinction between goals and goal-setting as well as between goals and performance management. The range of variables to be considered would need to include those variables reflecting means as well as quantified goals.

CHAPTER 15

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Advice is seldom welcome; and those who want it the most always like it the least.
Philip Dormer Stanhope

What we call the beginning is often the end and to make an end is to make a beginning. The end is where we start from.
T.S. Eliot, 1942

15.0 PREAMBLE

The aim of this chapter is to examine if this research is meeting the objectives established in Chapter 1. It provides a review of the aims of the research, the extent to which have been met and a summary of the key findings and conclusions. Contributions that this study makes in extending the literature, recommendations and areas for future research are also provided.

15.1 THE FULFILMENT OF THE AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The overall primary aim of this research was to gain insights on first-line managers' perceptions on the various elements of performance management and its cornerstone, goals. The research deliberately targets the level of management that directly oversees the preponderance of human resources. It is acknowledged that first-line managers affect the performance of subordinates. This approach implicitly recognises their unique perspective because of their singular role in the organisation.

At the beginning of the study, four key objectives were defined:

1) To identify differences between perceptions and theories in order to bridge the gap between theory and practice;

2) To compare/contrast the responses of samples taken from two distinct populations, Canada and Japan, to ascertain the impact of differing management premises;
3) To identify common factors encompassed by the various models related to performance and productivity models, resulting in the formulation of the Generic Performance Model. Factors such as personal and environmental factors, training needs, recognition and other factors which might influence respondents' performance and that of their respective departments are investigated.
4) To determine the extent of internal congruency that might exist between the responses to the various questions, and the implications in understanding the inner-workings of the Generic Performance Model.

Each of these objectives has been met. Areas of consensus emerged from the review of various performance/productivity models and yielded common factors used in the formulation of the Generic Performance Model. The multi-dimensional nature of goals is clearly illustrated using the existing literature to demonstrate the need to survey individuals as to their own perceptions. The results of the responses reveal a broader definition of goals, which includes means as well as ends to be achieved. A number of perspectives recognise that goals can be more than a mere statistic.

The level of first-line management is selected as being key in the management chain and being the primary interface with workers. The exploration was accomplished by the design of a survey instrument, using open-ended questions, which was administered in Canada and Japan. A phenomenological protocol suitable for processing the responses

was used for the tabulation of each question. The findings are corroborated by the literature dealing with Japanese and American management practices.

The complexity of the issue and the process involved must not be overlooked and their importance is made clear through the review of productivity/performance models postulated in a number of disciplines. Common elements which form the rationale for the Generic Performance Model embrace environmental characteristics and self-efficacy/training needs, goals and recognition/feedback. The research emphatically recognises the interdependency of the elements, demonstrated by the internal consistency between the responses to each question. Differences and commonalities between Canada and Japan are propounded. They provide a wider perspective on the nature of goals and on the elements of the Generic Performance Model. The contrast in answers prompts the search for root-causes. The addition of corporate values to the Model is a direct result of the congruence of the responses found in the two populations. These values explain the differences in the perspectives.

The study unequivocally meets the supporting objectives. The major limitations of previous research are circumvented by obtaining data directly from first-line managers; they were free to express their views on the various topics investigated without constraints or prompting.

15.2 ADEQUACY OF RESEARCH PROCEDURES IN MEETING THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Three basic areas were identified to ensure that the procedural aspects of the research have been met:

1. The research methodology employed would yield the necessary information in order to make an appropriate assessment.

2. The degree to which the Generic Performance Model would reflect the spectrum of issues pertinent to adequately cover the variables affecting performance.

3. The findings are supported by other research so as to validate the observations through triangulation.

15.2.1 Critical Evaluation of Research Methodology

This study takes into consideration the different criticisms directed to past research, more specifically in relation to:

- the lack of research on the actual nature and content of goals,
- the disconnect between research and the workplace,
- the oversimplification of reality, and
- the need to reflect the multi-faceted and multi-disciplined nature of existing models.

Asking individuals to express their own perceptions by using open-ended questions and avoiding phrasing questions in relation to any specific discipline or outlook has allowed for a fresh perspective to be launched on the issue of goals. Having no pre-set list of topics, the tabulation categories evolved from the responses. The challenge was to define such categories in a methodical fashion. Such an approach can be the subject of criticism as well as be valuable in truly reflecting the content of the responses. For example, training to improve or increase personal skills as a manager could easily be co-mingled with training to better understand the inner workings of the department in order to be of greater value to the group. If pre-set quantitative responses had been used to cover the number of potential alternatives, the number of questions would have grown exponentially. It would also have implied that the researcher had prior knowledge of the many potential alternatives.

From the onset of the research, it was recognised that cause and effect between the answers collected and performance results could not be statistically determined because of the confounding effect of the variables involved. As such, the methodology employed was considered best suited to the exploratory nature of the research. The results allowed the researcher to gain insights into how first-line managers "are thinking and how they naturally understand their world" (Cozby *et al*, 1989).

15.2.2 Generic Performance Model Reflecting the Variables Affecting Performance

It was demonstrated that each discipline or author has a unique outlook on performance/productivity. Common elements were identified among the different perspectives; the consensus formed the basis for the development of the Generic Performance Model.

While some models operate at the macro level, such as economic models, others, such as self-efficacy models, relate to the individual and have been validated, usually in a university setting, using students as a population sample. Independently of the perspective chosen, all models share the same broad categories. However, with the use of open-ended questions, the answers indicate that no new variables need to be added to the model. The responses expressed by first-line managers actually show a much narrower focus, with their vistas limited to their immediate situations. For example, the quality and motivation of subordinates can be the result of various root causes such as hiring, training practices or remuneration to attract talent. The responses are limited to the situation and do not address broader issues which could have contributed to the circumstances encountered. Therefore, in areas such as environmental characteristics,

the scope should be narrowed down to the elements directly impacting on first-line managers.

The interaction between the different variables is generally acknowledged by the internal congruence of the responses. For example, a lack of training can be identifiable in the nature of goals being pursued or in the type of problems being encountered. In this research, the frequency distribution of the responses is a good indication of the relative importance of certain factors as perceived by first-line managers and, more specifically, the development of human resources management skills and corporate values. The results of this research suggest that managerial values and practices do affect first-line managers' responses, as demonstrated by training practices, training needs and goals. This would insinuate that the applicability of the findings might be independent of the type of organisation and country and, as mentioned by several authors, corporate management culture can supersede national culture.

15.2.3 Findings Supported by Other Research

Several bodies of research support the findings. Descriptive cases and studies of Japanese management practices reaffirm the observations from the data and the distinctions between Canadian and Japanese practices. Literature on goal-setting practices confirms the importance of first-line managers, as well as the factors affecting the outcomes. The importance of feedback on goal-setting and self-efficacy further reinforces the need for communication and recognition. Time allocation and skills required help explain how the nature of goals should be broadened to reflect the value-added of first-line managers.

The responses to the training needs and frustrations provide an insight as to the managerial issues which each system engenders. In the Canadian case, the need to better equip first-line managers to handle the human resource dimension is undeniable: this is because human resources are the one variable over which first-line managers have the most direct and close control. Therefore, it is posited that the means, namely the human resource dimension, is acknowledged as an area of need which is lacking, to a great extent, in the Canadian first-line managers' thinking; this is not surprising as the same dichotomy is present in the American literature. Many principles of organisational behaviour theories, such as those relating to equity and expectancy, place the focus on output tied to individual effort (Hellriegel, 1998). MBOs and similar approaches of goal setting may fail to reflect the typical role and time allocation of first-line managers. Each of these has been developed in a one dimensional point-of-view and failed to recognise the symbiotic effect and the need for integration of these factors which culminate at the first-line management level. The results of this study demonstrate the need to integrate these various perspectives in a consistent corporate approach in which first-line managers, as well as all employees, are trained and indoctrinated so as to provide a cohesive, single purpose-driven workforce.

15.3 SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

This section is composed of two parts. The first is an overview of key findings resulting from the tabulation of each question. The second provides an overall assessment, integrating the individual results into the performance management process.

15.3.1 Overall Key Findings

The tabulation of the individual questions reveals seven salient findings:

1) The Canadians concentrate on goals of a personal nature, focusing on 'end' results. In contrast, the Japanese aim to develop the human resources within their charge and look at the 'means'.

2) The Canadians identify training needs in the area of people management skills as their key concern. The Japanese seek to acquire further knowledge on the inner workings of the department, as well as factors outside the realm of their operations. such as external competitive pressures and economic factors.

3) The frustrations reported, as well as the goal focus and the training need responses, are congruent with the managerial practices generally described in the literature pertaining to the two populations. In all categories, the Canadian response rates are at a ratio of 2 to 1 compared to the Japanese, with the exception of both groups equally bemoaning their relationship with upper management.

4) Both groups identify time demands, quality of subordinates and managerial processes as impediments to their performance. However, the Japanese show no predominant area of concern whilst the Canadians' main disquiet, by a margin of 2 to 1, relates to the work climate.

5) In terms of what would make the job fantastic, the Japanese response rates are, on average, twice as prevalent compared to the Canadians in such factors as sense of accomplishment, creativity, outcomes and better management interface. Both populations are similar in the areas of personal and subordinate-related factors.

6) With regard to gratifying moments, the Canadian data shows a much greater frequency of responses for recognition in one form or another, while 90% of the Japanese answers identify self-fulfilment as their primary source of satisfaction, followed by 50% determining results (outcomes) as key satisfiers.

7) The responses to the various questions show internal congruency. This would suggest that the process is more than the sum of the parts. The underlying values of the Canadian and Japanese management practices are imbued through the responses to the various questions. These observations would lead one to conclude that the various components of the model operate in a dynamic, interactive fashion.

15.3.2 Overall Implications of the Findings

Clear differences have emanated between the two sampled populations. Based upon the articulation of the respondents' perceptions, the following conclusions can be affirmed. The 'ends' or the 'means', as well as the issue of personal achievement or group proficiency, immediately come to the fore. The Canadians' goal expectations are focused on issues which relate to the accomplishment of specific tasks or end results as

well as their own well-being, that is personal outcomes such as promotion and personal recognition. The Japanese focus on the group's abilities, as confirmed throughout the literature. Canadians verbalise their need for personal development in interpersonal skills and the need for OJT, while their Japanese counterparts are more focused on the development of skills which will help raise the effectiveness of their departments and their corporation as a whole. This clearly demonstrates the importance of managerial practices.

Based upon these responses as well as on successes of certain Japanese transplants emulating parent company practices, it can be assumed that goal perceptions are very much affected or influenced by both the training received and the degree to which managerial practices reflect the principles and values expounded. The responses to the questions dealing with frustrations, satisfaction and recognition further reinforce the findings related to goals and training needs; they are a poignant indication of internal consistency. A self-centred outlook on goals is in harmony with personal recognition responses; intrinsic satisfaction of work well done is consistent with self-efficacy goals.

Such examples strongly reflect the basic differences in focus between the two populations. Moreover, corporate values play a very important role in the practices and organisational management processes and, therefore, influence the responses of first-line managers. These values are reflected in the nature of goals, the degree of commitment to the development of human resources as well as in the nature of feedback and recognition.

15.4 CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

This research makes significant contributions in a number of areas. In the process of investigating the goal perceptions of first-line managers, a Generic Performance Model was developed which identifies the areas of consensus as to what would constitute key elements of a performance model with as its starting point, goals. Empirical data was collected from two distinct populations which subscribe to distinct management models.

While academic research in the area of goals and performance management is available, the content seems either anecdotal in the form of case studies or theoretical in proposing a model based upon deductive reasoning or upon results of narrowly conducted experiments in very controlled situations. This research relies on primary data collected in the workplace. It is based upon an extensive survey, across organisations, in two distinct countries using open-ended questions. The result of this methodology is that the findings cover a breadth of topics, as raised by the respondents who were free to answer in any way they saw fit; such responses are highly unstructured and varied. This study has addressed the need to provide a comparative insight on first-line managers' goal orientation, filling a number of important gaps in the existing knowledge. More specifically, it demonstrates that:

- The responses provide a first-hand insight on the nature of goals, as perceived by first-line managers, allowing for comparison between theory and practice.
- Various definitions of goals exist in the workplace; one basic difference is choice of emphasis between the ends or the means.
- The perception of goals differs between the two populations surveyed.
- Specific targets may not automatically be construed as goals. Although Japanese first-line managers have to meet specific end-points, their goal orientation focuses on the means, namely human resources, which is the dimension over which they have the most influence.

- The responses related to the other elements of the Generic Performance Model show high consistency with the values implicit with the choice of goals.
- The differences in management practices and management values are reflected in the responses of first-line managers.

When the plumb line of experimental and theoretical constructs is cross-checked with the descriptive results of this study, several practical implications come to the fore. There is the need to have goals reflecting the responsibilities and unique contribution of first-line managers. The development of all personnel cannot be left to osmosis to assure consistency of practices and values, especially important for first-line managers who are the key interface. Issues, such as the expectations placed on the position of first-line management and corporate values, need to be reconciled; the Japanese management model definitely inoculates, ingrains and promulgates a different set of expectations.

The results of this research not only serve to illustrate the disparate views of the two populations but also underscore the inner contradiction encountered in Western goal theories. Furthermore, research in the areas of time allocation and skill requirements support the importance of the 'means', as compared to goal research which concentrates on the 'ends' to be pursued.

15.5 CONCLUSION

The aim of the study has successfully been met. As pointed out by Osborne (1990), "phenomenological research is not intended to test a hypothesis but is based upon emphatic understanding. The method provides with description of experiences". Each response furnishes insights which might otherwise have been overlooked had any other methodology been used. The goal of developing subordinates or activating the

department is not part of the typical and generally accepted goal definition, such as that prescribed by Locke & Latham (1990). The data organised into categories and clusters divulges the overarching concerns and perspectives of first-line managers.

The qualitative nature of the responses requires interpretation in a number of ways. The development of categories from the responses is a subjective process, as the actual coding into the categories was dependent upon interpretation. In order to validate the coding, the use of an interrater proved that the responses were appropriately coded, and that the definition of the categories was pertinent enough to ensure that a third party would arrive at the same coding results. The findings of the research were validated through triangulation. There is internal consistency between the research findings and the conclusions ascertained. On-site observations and interviews have underpinned the overall conclusions. Furthermore, these findings are corroborated by the literature dealing with Japanese management and various fields of research which deal with goals. While the samples are large by phenomenological standards, the natural tendency would be to apply statistical procedures. However, according to Osborne (1991) and Miles & Huberman (1994), it was important to reveal the descriptive aspects of the responses. As such, the research met all the methodological requirements of phenomenological research.

Issues raised by the nature of the findings are both an indication of limitations as well as grounds for future research. Two main areas come to mind: (a) The true nature of goals needs to be expanded to contrast the differences in perspective between levels of management, and (b) The effect of corporate values, independent of the country of origin or seat of corporate headquarters, needs to be further investigated.

A possible limitation to be considered relates to the number of questions that can be asked. As indicated from the pilot test with Japanese managers at the University of Washington, the time required to answer the questionnaire was a primary consideration.

As the research is exploratory, new dimensions, which are not part of the goal theory literature, have been brought to the forefront. As primary research conducted, at the first-line management level, this study provides a new understanding of the dynamics that take place between task and means and between short-term outcomes and long-term investments in human resources. The factors acknowledged, as part of the Generic Performance Model, are seen in a new light, not as a collection of uni-dimensional issues being probed as in most controlled experiments, but more as a multi-dimensional framework within the workplace.

It is evident that this study takes a holistic perspective, integrating the different elements of the Model and focuses only upon one level of management, the first-line managers. The responses, combined with the literature related to goal-setting and self-efficacy, raise the issue as to what is really meant by 'goal'. At least three definitions evolve from different perspectives: (1) the 'classic' definition of specific, measurable outcome; (2) the means by which the end points will be reached and (3) the management process associated with implementation. As a result, the research brings out the various perspectives as 'descriptions of experiences'.

15.6 RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations put forward are two-fold in nature. The first relates to the need to integrate the different perspectives into one cohesive management process whilst the second refers to the practical use of the research findings.

15.6.1 Integration of Diverse Research Findings

Goals, roles and time allocations have been well researched by many over the years, each having their own findings. Because of the need to control variables, research so far has been limited in the number of such variables which can be considered. As real life workplace is multi-dimensional and interactive, these various perspectives intersect and overlap in the area of performance management. They must, therefore, be integrated into some form of management construct. In today's world-wide global economy, it is agreed that the contribution of human resources is a fundamental building block. While the Generic Performance Model identifies specific components, the first-line managers' responses indicate that the actual content of these elements should reflect the demands pertaining to this level of management.

Responses indicate that the compartmentalisation, typical of research studies, is not reflected by the responses themselves. Instead, a comprehensive view is to be taken of the whole process which, while sharing all the same elements of goals through feedback and recognition, must be distinguished between the contribution unique to the various entities, such as illustrated by the Middle-Up-Down Model suggested by Nonaka & Takeuchi (1995) and the Control-Check items suggested by Suzaki (1993).

15.6.2 Practical Use of Research Findings

The following suggestions are made for the practical use of the research findings within the setting of industrial and commercial organisations:

- Both the findings of the survey and some of the recent studies quoted in this research show the importance of the development of first-line managers: the relevance and application of such training can be assumed by OJT, so as to develop human resources at every level of the organisation.

- An increased focus on the means will assure that the end will be met with consistency between time allocation and roles to be reflected in the goals: the management process, at the first-line manager's level, needs to be reassessed to take into account the demands of the position.

- Corporate statements, which refer to the importance and value placed on employees, can only be prepared and implemented when the two previous recommendations are fully operational.

- Integrity in the application of values is a must in every aspect of the management process, ranging from recruitment and selection to communication. Inconsistencies being reflected in the goal responses, indicate a difference between what is being advocated and what is actually enacted. The true nature of corporate values, consistently applied throughout the organisation, would then be reflected in the nature of goals.

The purpose of this study was to identify the frame of mind of first-line Canadian and Japanese managers. The contrast between two basic management philosophies is clearly reflected by the responses and, to this end, the research is successful. It is true to say these findings may not be limited within each culture, as demonstrated by the experience of transplants and some world-class companies adopting similar practices.

One corollary element relates to the assumption regarding conveying and imparting values and thought processes, that is that individuals acquire them by osmosis through exposure on the day-to-day basis. Any overt effort to inculcate such perspectives might be an intrusion on the individuality of the person. However, through their orientation process, Japanese corporations believe that they must be conveyed in a deliberate fashion

to assure consistency, adoption and practice (Mestre *et al*, 1997). On this basis, all forms of training have the ulterior objective to assure a shared outlook. One major difference in the two approaches is the assumption about the respective role and prerogatives of organisations and individuals. Every aspect of the Generic Performance Model is affected by the approach chosen.

15.7 DIRECTION FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Based upon this study, future research could take several directions, with the following coming to the fore:

1. The need to review the definition of goals.
2. The universality of the concepts.
3. The responses of first-line managers in transplants.
4. The quantification of the factors.
5. A multi-level assessment within organisations.

1. The need to review the definitions of goals

As the result of the comparison between Canadian and Japanese responses, two fundamental questions arise which supersede the nature of goals: (1) What is the role of first-line managers? and (2) What are the true expectations of management from the first-line managers? To truly cultivate the human potential entrusted to first-line managers requires the long-term commitment of corporations to develop the people most instrumental in accomplishing the task.

According to Giblin & Amuso (1997) "the contradiction found in companies interested in short-term financial results while promulgating a totally disingenuous values

statement replete with contradiction" presents first-line managers with a dilemma. Such inconsistencies are visible in the nature of goals voiced by the respondents. "Little distinction is made on the basis of what the companies make or the discipline of the incumbent. What is being measured is what is being sold" (Fournies, 2000). The nature of goals must reflect the value-added role of managers and include people management.

Today, the change is even more critical as skilled workers become a commodity in short supply and fluid in their mobility. The challenge of managing people is recognised by Maitland (1999); he acknowledges the importance of workers and their characteristics as 'free agents', more loyal to their profession, motivated by challenging work and shared leadership. Even in the area of cleaning services, the move is to professionalise the industry and create a quality job at a high level of productivity (MacCarthy 1999). As Garten (1999) propounds, "The global economy is making improved labour relations imperative". This illustrates the new challenges in managing human resources and the need to review the concept of goals.

2. The universality of the concepts

Future research could extend the survey to other countries, where Japanese owners have transplanted their practices or where domestic organisations have adopted the same philosophy, such as Phillips (1985) and Synovus (2002). The recognition of differing managerial practices in different parts of the world is key when multinationals attempt to transplant their operations. Such a study would be similar in scope to those of Hofstede (1983) and Trompenaar (1996). China would be a very interesting possibility; given the history of central planning and both the communist party and company management involved in the decision making, would first-line managers have different kinds of goals?

To some extent, the portability of concepts have already been explored in China (Booth, 2002) where Korean, Taiwanese, Japanese and Canadian companies subscribed, in varying degrees, to some of these principles.

To truly assess the impact of corporate values and practices, similar surveys can be conducted in organisations in other countries where said practices have been successfully implemented. Major international consultancy groups such as McKinsey and The Conference Board, as well as governmental agencies from various countries such as China, Singapore and Canada, have recognised the need to develop human resources, and specifically first-line managers. This will greatly aid organisations to remain competitive in a fast changing global market scenario.

3. The responses of first-line managers in transplants

A research topic of interest would be to conduct the same survey in Japanese transplants in order to determine how much of the philosophy or values is actually reflected by first-line managers in offshore plants. A similar study could also be performed with world-class plants, which are not Japanese owned, but follow similar practices. Such an effort would allow for the determination of the effect of national culture. The inability to adopt 'new' practices (Beer, 1990; Sobeck *et al*, 1998) demonstrates that such endeavours often fail, even within the same organisation, emphasising the complexity associated with the implementation of management practices.

4. The quantification of the factors

Given the results of this study, a new instrument, quantitative in nature, could be developed to better qualify the importance of the various factors identified in this

research. While the open-ended responses reflect the individual's current thought process, they do not provide a comprehensive measure of the other dimensions, some of which may be taken for granted. Although some of the respondents may have been silent on a certain issue, it cannot be categorically concluded that it is not relevant to their situation; it may be that such issues were not critical at the time.

5. A multi-level assessment within the organisation

A similar study could be carried out across organisational levels. The bosses' perceptions of first-line managers' roles and goals, or the subordinates' expectations of first-line managers, would provide a 360° look at the issue of goals at different organisational levels. The importance of having a clear understanding of the first-line managers' conception of goals is best illustrated by Harrington (1997), who points out that appropriate change must occur in top, middle, and first-line managers or supervisors before the basic concepts are ever introduced to employees. He further states that 80% of today's problems can only be solved by management. In some ways, the practice of 360° evaluations is a backdoor attempt to determine the ability of managers to meet the needs of the diverse stakeholders. This is because most organisations have done a poor job of preparing managers for their leadership role.

Each of these five areas of research would provide insights that could further the understanding of the management process. Coupled with appropriate training programmes that would include values as well as techniques, such insights would greatly enhance the performance of the organisation and, thus, productivity.

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APPENDIX A

JAPANESE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

For the interpretation of the results, a brief description of some of the key environmental factors that are typical of Japanese industry is provided. While it might be considered presumptuous to attempt to cover such differences in managerial practices in a few pages, four factors were deemed crucial: Japanese ranks and organisational structure, the concept of group versus individual performance, the development of corporate ethos and the importance of training as it pertains to the whole organisation. Each plays an important role in setting the context in which goals are used and in which first-line managers operate.

A.1 Japanese Corporate Ranks

As reference for the reader, Figures A.1 through A.5 present a collection of Japanese organisational ranks (Whitehill, 1991; Hunt & Target, 1995; Lorriman & Kenjo, 1996). covering a variety of organisations. While titles may vary from organisation to organisation, there is general consensus on several issues that relate to the study of first-line management:

1) Membership in the company's union usually extends up to, and exclusive of, the position of director. This is an important factor as Japanese companies divide the workforce into senior management and everyone else (Hunt & Target, 1995).

2) The transition between lower and middle management, best described as the level where the focus of the manager changes from people management to business management, occurs at the *Bucho* (Department Chief/Head) level.

3) As pointed out by Whitehill (1991) and Lorriman & Kenjo (1996), age/seniority play an important role up to the rank of *Kacho* or manager level (typically age 35 to 40).

Position	Title	Translation	Age (approx.)
Top management	*Keiei shaku*	Board member	Early 50s to late 60s or 70s
	Keiei kanbu	Executives	
	Kaicho	Chairman	
	Shacho	President	
	Fuku shacho	Vice President	
	Senmu torishimoriyaku	Senior Managing Director	
	Jomu torishimariyaku	Managing Director	
	Torishimariyaku	Director	
Middle management	*Kanrisha/midoru manejimento*	Middle manager	Mid-40s
	Bucho	Department Chief/Head	
	Chukan kanrishoku, Kacho	Section Chief/Head	
	Employees (*Kaishain* = company members)		
Junior management	*Kakaricho*	Sub-Section Chief	Early to mid 30s
	Hancho	Group Leader	
	Shunin	Person in Charge	
	Daichiesen kontokusha[a]	First-line Supervisor	
	Shokucho[a]	Foreman	
	Uribasekinisha[b]	Floor Manager	
	Tencho[b]	Person in Charge (Store Chief)	

[a] Job titles in factory.
[b] Job titles in a department store

Source: Hunt &Target (1995)

Figure A.1 Japanese Corporate Ranks

Whitehill (1991) provides a similar description of Japanese Organisational ranks (Figure A.2) but with two important distinctions. One is that union membership extends to the level of *Bucho*. The second, because of the union membership criteria is the categorisation of individuals as either top management or as employees.

Top management	Chairman	*Kaicho*
	President	*Shacho*
	Vice president	*Fuku shacho*
	Senior managing director	*Senmu torishimariyaku*
	Managing directors	*Jomu torishimariyaku*
	Directors	*Torishimariyaku*
Employees	General manager (Division or department head)	*Bucho*
	Deputy general manager	*Bucho dairi*
	Section chief	*Kacho*
	Deputy section chief	*Kacho dairi*
	Subsection chief	*Kakaricho*
	Foreman	*Hancho*
	Ordinary employee	*Hirashain*

Source: Whitehill (1991)

Figure A.2 Japanese Organisational Ranks

As examples, ranking systems of three leading Japanese organisations are furnished: Toshiba (Figure A.3), Matsushita Electric (Figure A.4) and Fujitsu (Figure A.5).

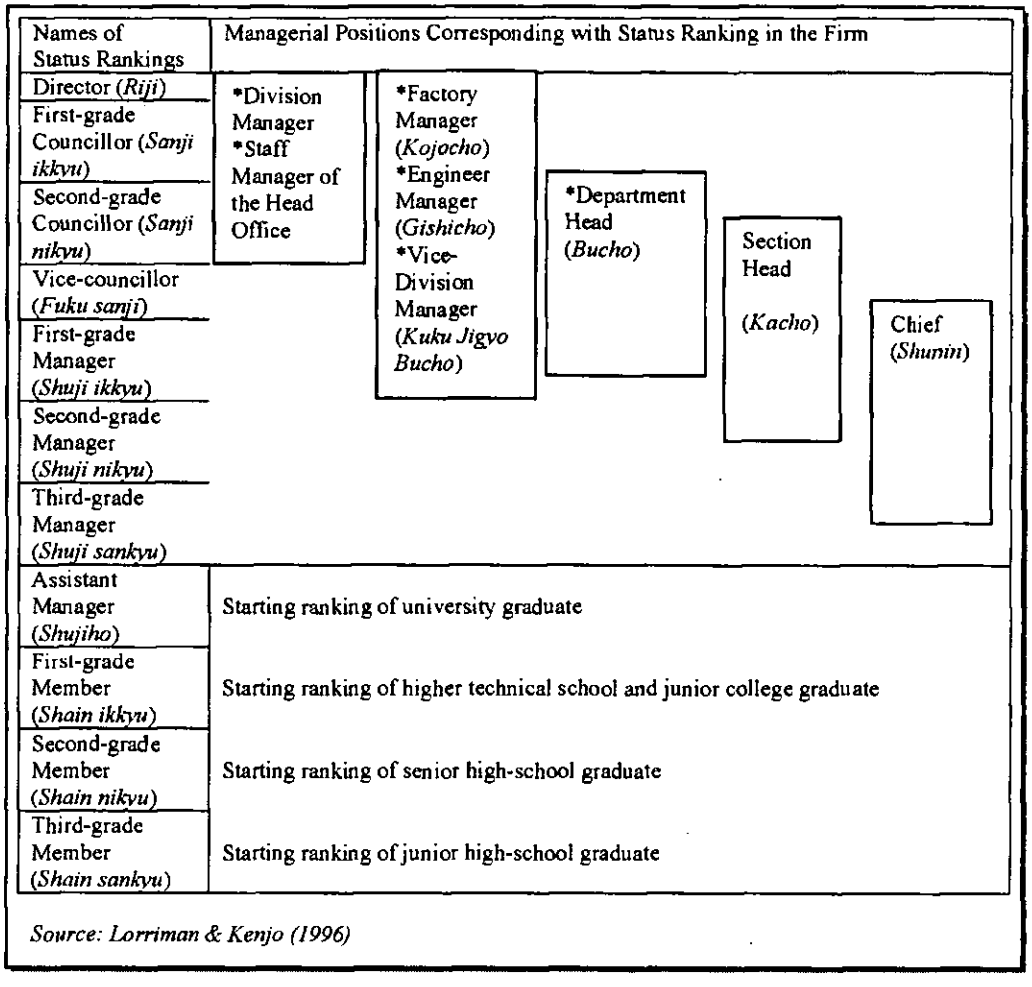


Figure A.3 Ranking System in Toshiba

"Diagram of the status-ranking system in Toshiba and how the status rankings correspond with managerial positions within the firm, with a promotion model for an employee who worked for the firm continuously since leaving full-time education" (Lorriman & Kenjo, 1996).

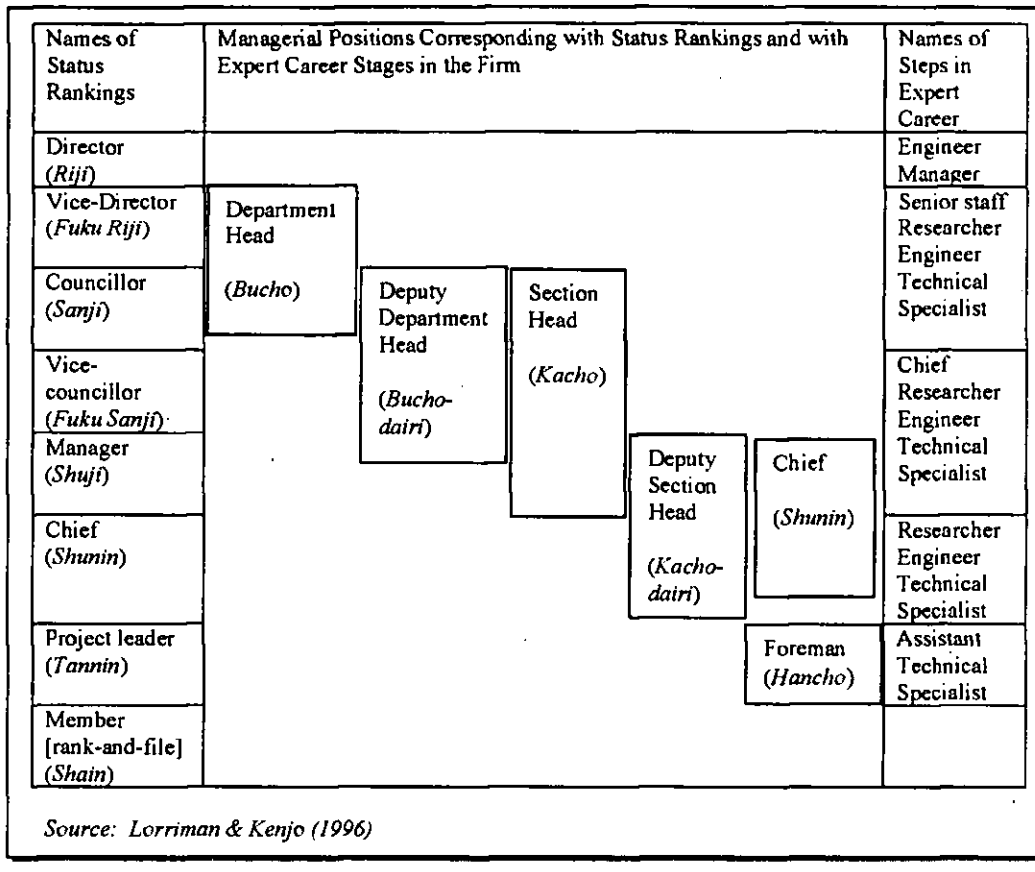
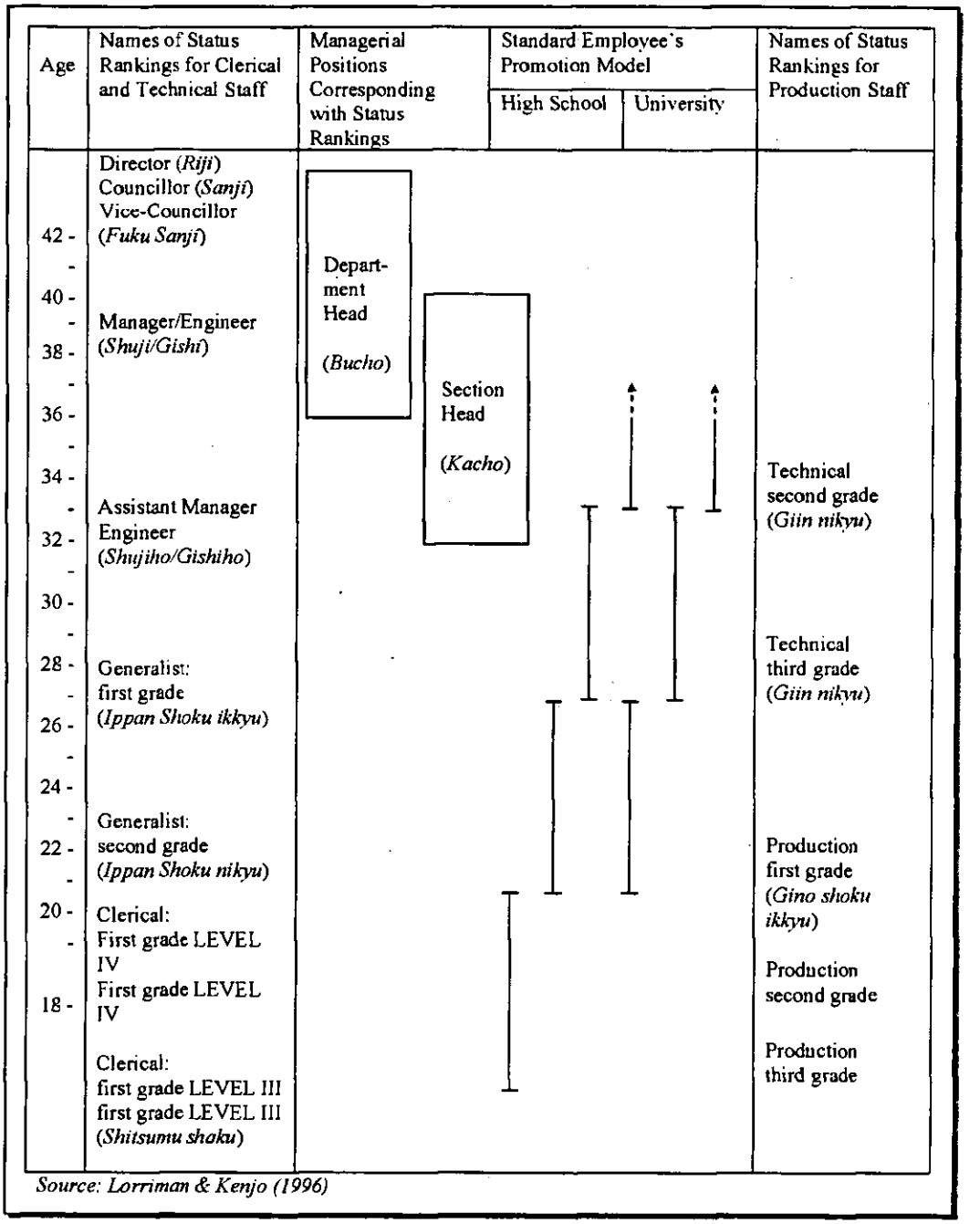


Figure A.4 Ranking System in Matsushita Electric

"Diagram of the status-ranking system in Matsushita Electric and how the status rankings correspond with managerial positions and 'expert career' (specialist technical) positions within the firm (the Japanese names for status rankings and managerial positions, of which each firm has its own individual hierarchy, are given in brackets)" (Lorriman & Kenjo, 1996).



Source: Lorriman & Kenjo (1996)

Figure A.5 Ranking System in Fujitsu

"Diagram of the status-ranking systems in Fujitsu and how the status rankings correspond with managerial positions within the firm (the Japanese names for status

rankings and managerial positions, of which each firm has its own individual hierarchy, are given in brackets)" (Lorriman & Kenjo, 1996).

As illustrated, Japanese companies have their own terminology but the underlying philosophy is the same. "Many use a system of double-track ladder of promotion. It separates the traditional position from the employee's grade, the former being the functional position and the latter the promotional status" (Inohara, 1990). The concept of top, middle and first-line management is common to all.

Rank and seniority are closely related at the lower levels of management. Climbing the ranks in a Japanese company depends upon a compromise between age-seniority and meritocracy (Whitehill, 1991). For the first ten years of an employee's career, the major factor is seniority. While some amount of flattening organisations has taken place in the last few years (Japan Insight, 2002; JETRO, 1999; Weeklypost, 1999) and that performance has become a greater part of promotion criteria, the distinction between levels of management and roles have pretty much remained the same (Trends in Japan, 1997). However, Japanese firms are conservative when it comes to introducing changes in the workplace but when they do, they do so incrementally (Arunachalam & Subramian, 1997). While actions are taking place in reducing or removing inefficiencies, the basic management processes remain the same.

The main level of manager actually in charge of subordinates is the *Kacho*. The next level up is the *Bucho* who is responsible for profit centres (Yoshimura, 1997). For the purpose of this research, the line of demarcation between first-line and middle management was thus established at the *Kacho* level. On average, attaining the rank of

Kacho (Section Chief) is reached after ten years service. All workers up to the rank of *Bucho* (Department Head) and below the rank of *Torishimoriyaku* (Director) are members of the company union (Whitehill, 1991). The job title of *Kacho* for the *samurai* platoon sergeant, with its corporate-warrior overtones, is becoming less popular and that of *riidaa* (Group Leader), with its suggestion of informal teamwork, more so (Economist, 2001). The titles may change, but the role remains the same.

In addition to the issue of rank, the prestige of the location to which an employee is assigned during job rotation is also an important factor. For example, assignments to Tokyo (usually the location of the Head Office) provide high visibility and are usually an indication of performance recognition and growth potential. Similarly, assignment to major rather than minor cities is also preferable.

A.2 Individual vs. Group Responsibility

As pointed out by Gow (1988), there are great difficulties in classifying jobs in a country where job specifications are uncommon. Inohara (1990) says that a *shokuruu* (job) cannot be considered as specific to and monopolised by the individual who currently happens to hold that job. More important than the current job and its requirements are general qualifications or *shokuna* (basic and general ability to work)". During the visit of a well-established large assembly plant, the managers pointed out that they were in the process of developing individual job description in order to qualify for ISO certification. While operations may be well defined, the responsibility of the individual remains focused on meeting the obligations of the group.

The basic organisational unit in Japanese companies is the '*ka*' or section. It is to these organisational units, rather than to specific individuals, that authority and responsibility are assigned. The team, group or unit is accountable to meet the goals set for the unit as a whole, instead of each person being accountable solely his/her own performance. The individual's success is measured by the success of a group (Whitehill, 1991). Until just recently, any effort to make individuals accountable was rather limited. At the beginning of every working day, section heads talk to their sections and outline the work priorities for that day. They also allocate the work between teams so that no individual has the burden of responsibility (Hunt & Target, 1995). One person's responsibility does not end by meeting personal quotas but rather when the team has met its obligations.

The group emphasis starts from the time the individual joins the company. There is no specific job description for individual entrants nor are their responsibilities clearly defined (Sai, 1995). This mode of operation is continued throughout the individual's career. During that period, along with other members of his/her entering class, he/she will be given extensive on-the-job training and rotated among various sections and plants of the company (Whitehill, 1991). During the first ten years or so of the career, the trainee gradually will be introduced to increasingly responsible tasks. It is likely that he/she will move between functions, offices, and geographical locations (Whitehill, 1991). As pointed out by Aoki (1994), overlapping responsibilities are delegated to workers. As new recruits join the organisation, they assume some of the tasks from their senior (*senpai*). An individual's role is not spelled out formally in a job description and each worker is expected to learn from his/her supervisor verbally and from specific jobs given on a day-to-day basis (Sai 1995). The presence of the *senpai* and the supervisor is primary.

The Office Senior (*shakuba senpai*) is expected to help his/her *kohai* (junior) in learning the social life as well as the formal requirements of the job (Whitehill, 1991). The senior, in turn, trains, supervises and assists. "It is above all the duty of the first-line manager to put aims, principles and plans of management into practice. That means, only through the foreman is the will of the company realised. The combining of a union role and a management role in one person is quite common for the Japanese and first-level supervisors are nearly unassailable. The supervisor density in Japanese plants is 8 to 10 fold more than in comparable German plants" (Jürgens, 1985). This phenomenon can easily be explained by a seniority-driven promotion policy. The typical management pyramid would, under this system, look like a broad-based column.

A key management practice that enhances group performance is the *ringi* system of consultation which allows all those affected by a decision to express inputs. When an initial idea, probably from the top-executive level, is generated, it is passed down. It is only then that the important discussion for preparing the ground, often referred to as *nemawashi*, takes place (Whitehill, 1991). In other words, a proposal is written by the initiator of the idea (*ringi-sho*) and is circulated to all affected for review and approval.

In quoting Kotaro Higuchi, President of Asahi Beer, Sai (1995) conveys the importance of the people dimension in Japanese corporations: "It is not enough for a company to make a profit, it must provide a working environment in which employees can feel a sense of worth, and appreciate having an opportunity to work there". These values are shared by presidents of many large corporations such as Sumitomo, Matsushita, and Kyocera (Inanmori, 1995). The basic philosophy of Japanese management can be best illustrated by a statement from Mr. Matsushita, founder of the Matsushita conglomerate,

"Management based on collective wisdom is management by all employees" (Economist, 2001). This collective vs. individual focus could be construed as cultural. However, the process involved in nurturing such an organisational ethos is not taken for granted but is very much part of the management process.

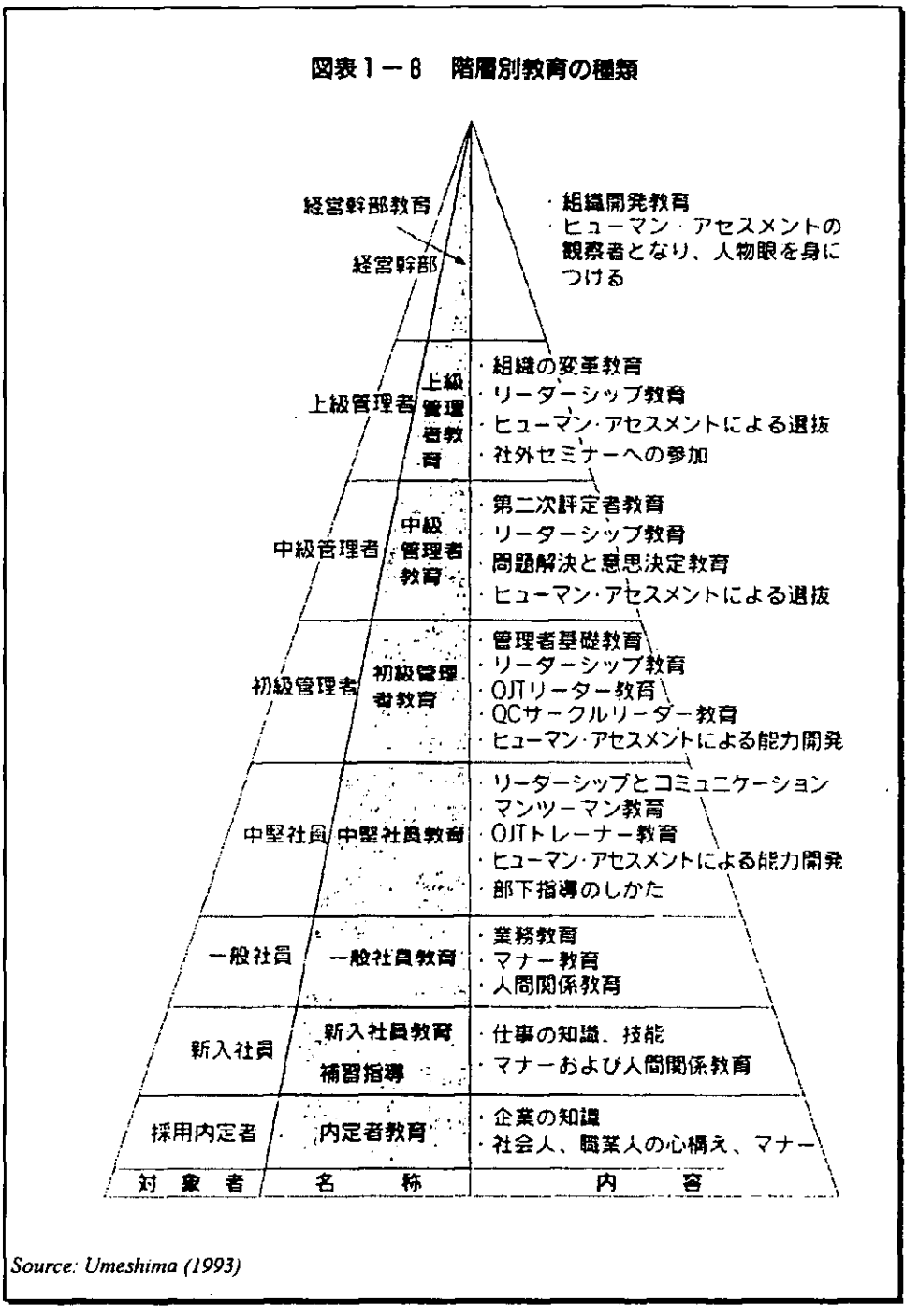
A.3 Development of Organisational Uniqueness

In order to gain a greater understanding of Japan's methods of operation, information was obtained from Japanese corporations which outlines their recruitment, selection and development of personnel practices. This aspect of collectivism is achieved by an overt combination of efforts, starting from the time of recruitment and extending throughout the individual's career. While some of the practices appear inefficient or delve in areas which may infringe on the individual's domain, many seem most desirable, such as the concept of *Kokorogomae* (conditioning of the heart) (Mestre, 1997). In English, the closest equivalent would be indoctrination which, according to Webster's Dictionary, is to instruct especially in fundamentals and rudiments, to imbue with a usual partisan or sectarian opinion, point of view or principle. While this may take a negative connotation, it is used in a very constructive way through the recognition that human beings are social creatures. The performance of an organisation as a whole determines its survival (Buchanan, 1985). Blake & Mouton (1981) echo the concept of integration: "All who participate in carrying out an activity must necessarily share similar values and therefore contribute behaviour consistent with those values in order for effective performance to result. People engaged in a joint activity need a basis for shared understanding of concepts and values underlying that activity". The Japanese employ an orientation process that strives to build relationships, identity, values and group interaction, starting with the hiring process. Historically, this sense of organisational

uniqueness is reflected in the reluctance of employers to consider experience in another organisation as valuable as experience acquired in the company's own setting. Extensive training is provided to assure consistent approaches and thought-processes in enhancing corporate performance.

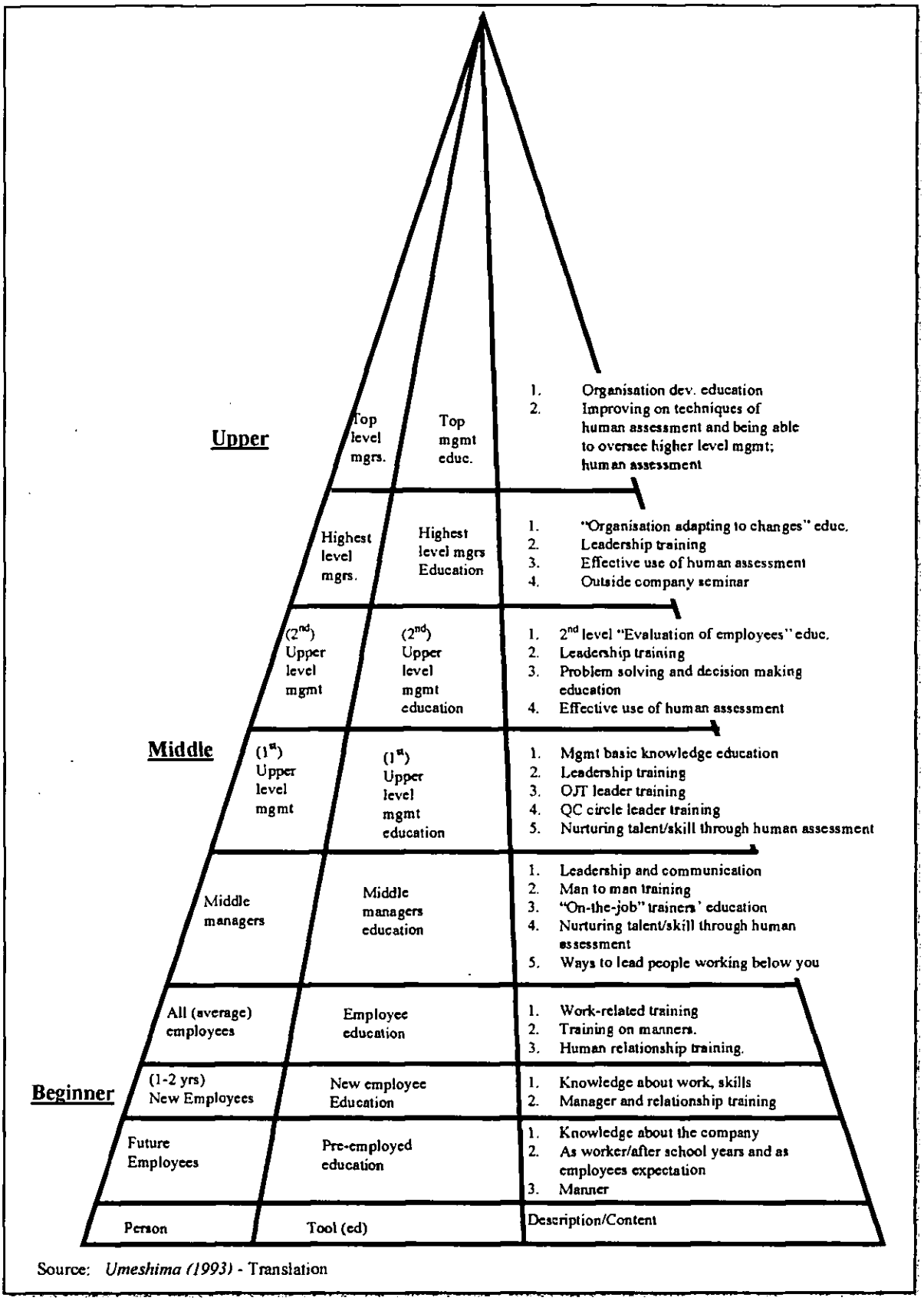
A.4 Japanese Corporate Training Programmes

As the promotion system is very much related to seniority, it also signifies *ipso facto* that all employees, for the first ten years, go through the same training programme. Umeshima (1993), in his book 'Techniques of Education and Seminars for Employees Statics *(Shain Kyoiku – Kenshu No Nouhau)*' illustrates how such training applies to all levels within the organisation (Figures A.6/A.7). By studying the topics in the last column of the pyramid, it can be quickly seen that the topics reflect both the responsibilities at each level of management and the heavy component of human/people resource management. The exposure and reinforcement of corporate values and practices start even before individuals join the company and are revisited at every level of management.



Source: Umeshima (1993)

Figure A.6 Japanese Management Development Process



Source: *Umeshima (1993)* - Translation

Figure A.7 Japanese Management Development Process - Translation

Every effort is made to prepare each line of management for the human element of the job. The best way to assure effective integration of new employees is to ensure that first-line managers are competent to develop the human potential of their staff. The corporate practice of continuous, company-wide training at all organisational levels is observed during the many visits to various companies in Japan. As an example, Figure A.8 is taken from the brochure describing the training programme for the year of a major Japanese corporation. The top line is divided into four different categories: Basic Training, Production Personnel Training, Business Skills and Other. Each has sub-sections (line 2). Basic Skills includes training in management and interpersonal skills. At level 4, the principles of job methods, job instruction and job relations are part of the schedule for managers-to-be. At the grade 5 level, New Group Leader Training includes Planning Skills, Communication, TWI-JR. At the grade 6 level, the basic training skills would include Assessment Training. Grade levels 4, 5 and 6 are translated (Figure A.9). At every level, each of these topical areas would be part of a refresher programme. Such a schedule represents the determination, volition and commitment by Japanese corporations.

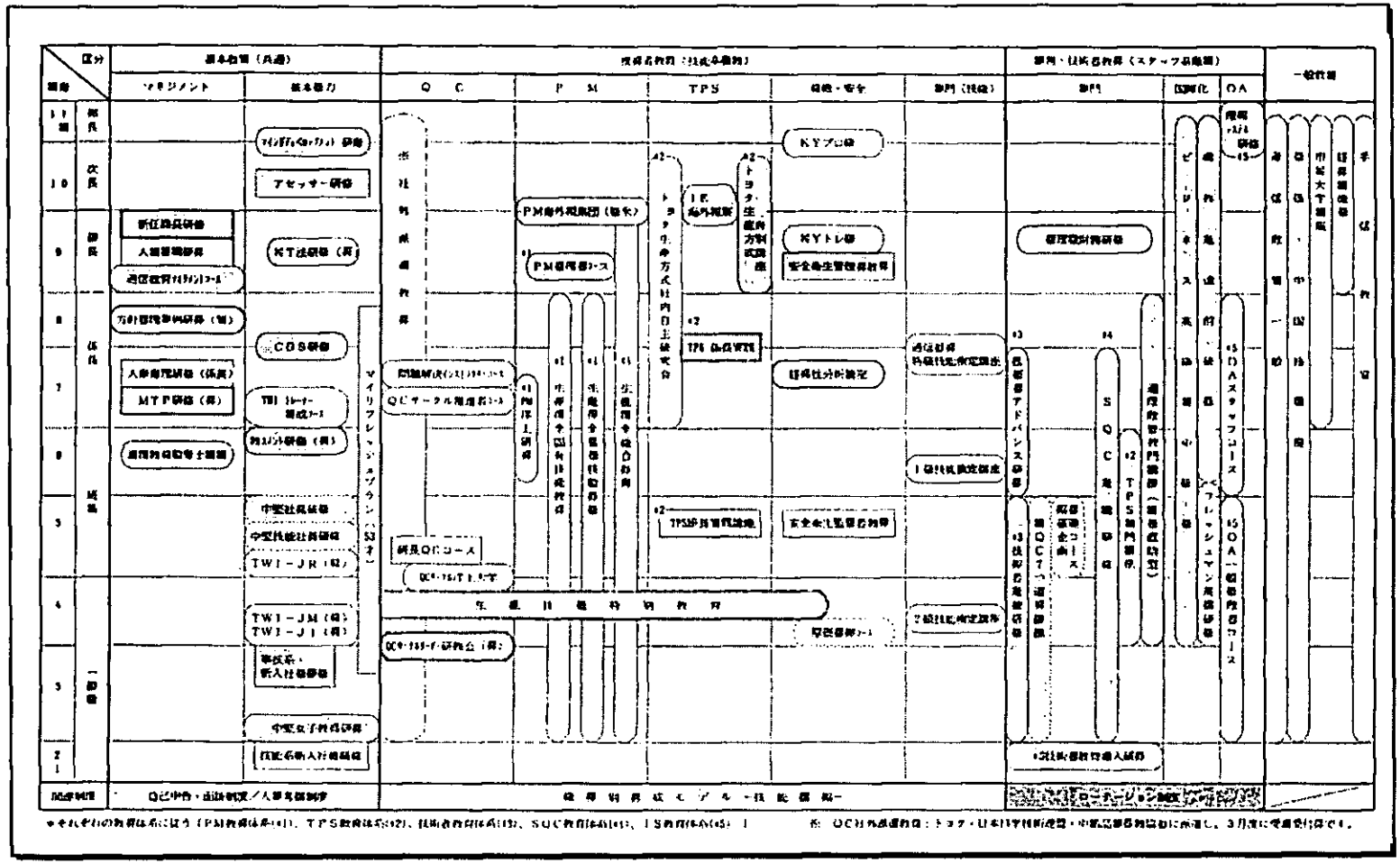


Figure A.8 Yearly Schedule - Management Development Programmes (Major Multinational Japanese Corporation)

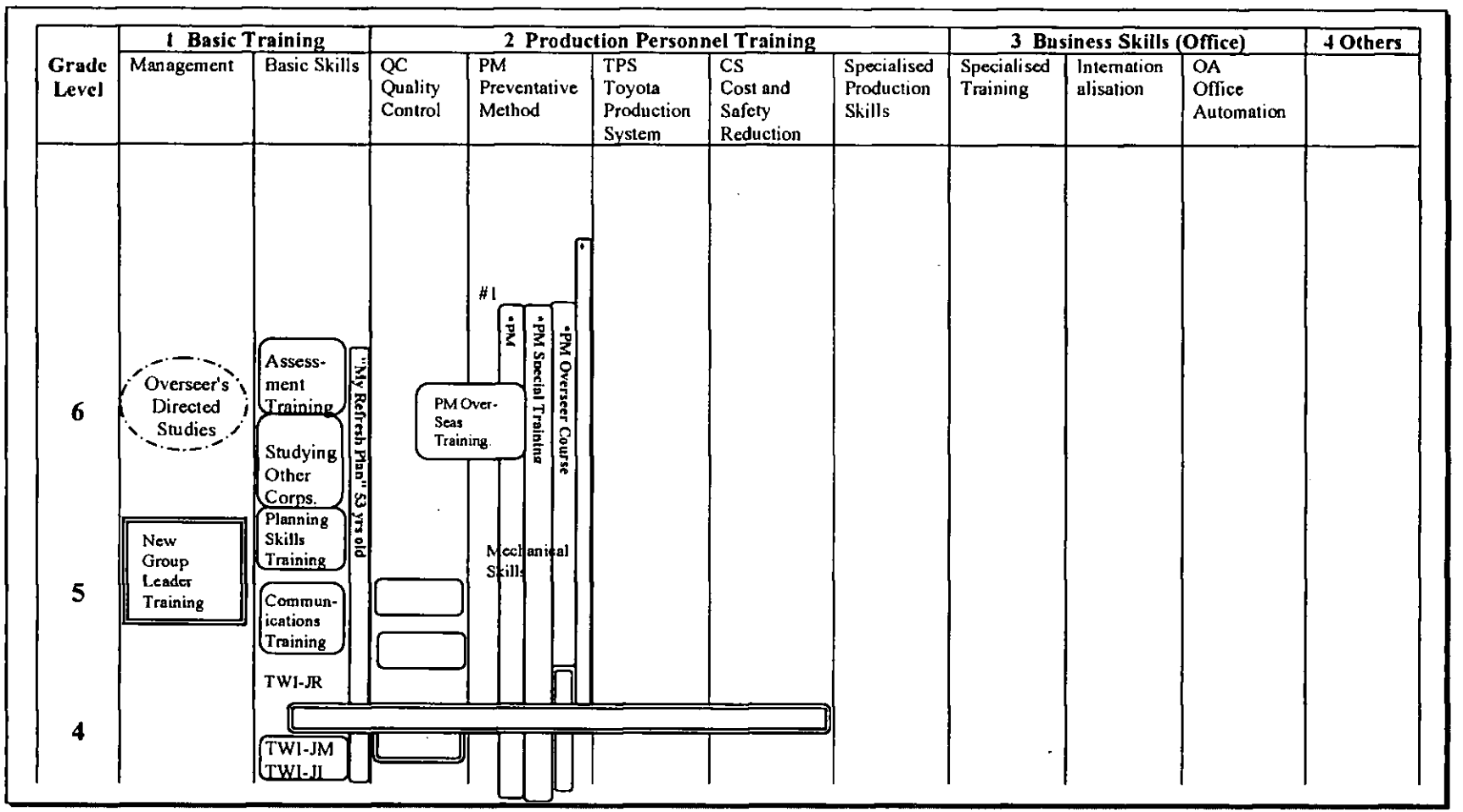


Figure A.9 Illustration of Yearly Management Development Training Schedule (Partial Translation of Figure A.8)

This training outlook is not exclusively Japanese. It actually originated after World War II and the reconstruction of Japan by General McArthur (Robinson & Schroeder, 1993; Shibya & Graupp, 2000). The TWI programmes were initially developed to assist with the war effort in the United States by the Bureau of Training of the War Manpower Commission, they consisted of three modules: JM (Job Methods), JI (Job Instruction) and JR (Job Relations), dealing respectively with how to improve procedures, how to develop a well-trained workforce and how to lead people. The realisation that workers "have latent ideas which, if properly developed, will increase production, reduce lost time, prevent waste of material and increase the use of machinery and equipment" (Bureau of Training, 1943) is not a new one. Neither are the training programmes. The same acrostics of TWI, JM, JI, and JR can be seen in Figure A.8; they describe the corporate training programme of a major Japanese corporation, a world-wide leader in its industry. The Bureau of Training (1944) stresses that "More production through skilled supervision is seen as only the results of developing supervisors' needs"; as far as it is concerned, meeting the following five needs of supervisors is key:

1) **Knowledge of the Work**.- Materials, machines, tools, processes, operations, products and how they are made and used.

2) **Knowledge of Responsibilities**. – Policies, agreements, rules, regulations, schedules, interdepartmental relationship.

3) **Skills in Instructing**. – Breaking down each job into units easily learned, making the learner receptive, presenting the instruction, trying out his/her performance, following up for results.

4) **Skills in Improving Methods**. - Utilising materials, machines and manpower more effectively by having supervisors study each operation in order to eliminate, combine, rearrange and simplify details of the job.

5) **Skill in Leading**. – Increasing production by helping supervisors to improve their understanding of individuals, their ability to size up situations, and their ways of working with people.

That is "MORE PRODUCTION THROUGH SKILLED SUPERVISION!"

The importance of training represents a considerable effort expended by Japanese corporations. For example, a study about automotive plants training practices (Rehder, 1992) shows new production workers receiving 370 hours of training in Japanese transplants versus 46 hours for U.S. plants in North America. In addition, 71% of the workforce is involved in teams compared to 17% for US plants in the U.S. Suzaki (1993) underscores the close relationship between skills and goals: "As people skills are upgraded, the goal-setting process will also be upgraded". The training and congruent work practices are contingent on the first-line managers' level of ability.

Personnel policies also underscore the concern for training. Pre-planned, integrated, multidimensional forms of training are made available at every level of the organisation, as illustrated by Figures A.8 and A.10. In addition to the scheduled training programmes provided by the larger corporations, extensive training programmes are offered by quasi-governmental organisations. A large amount of correspondence courses are also available to individuals with higher aspirations. These are usually referred to as Off-the-Job Training programmes (off JT). A further dimension to training is the variety of experiences through job rotation which further extends both the knowledge of the company's activities and appreciation of the different disciplines. It is one of the key training tools utilised by Japanese corporations. Potential managers are recruited into a large company as generalists rather than specialists. Once new recruits have served a period of two years, it is conventional practice to rotate them between a series of jobs (Hunt & Target, 1995).

In total, these three methods are employed to develop human resources in all aspects of their lives within the workplace. As can be seen, two are by company policy and practice

but Off-the-Job Training is at the discretion of the employee. The overall human development process is captured in the diagram obtained from another large Japanese corporation (Figure A.10), showing the breadth of training programmes. The Education and Training box reveals the different levels of management exposed to both Off-the-Job Training and OJT, using both internal and external sources of training. The middle box recognises the need for personal motivation and career development. The third box on the right outlines the Human Resources system that is used in order to facilitate the process at the corporate level, tracking the programmes and progress of individuals.

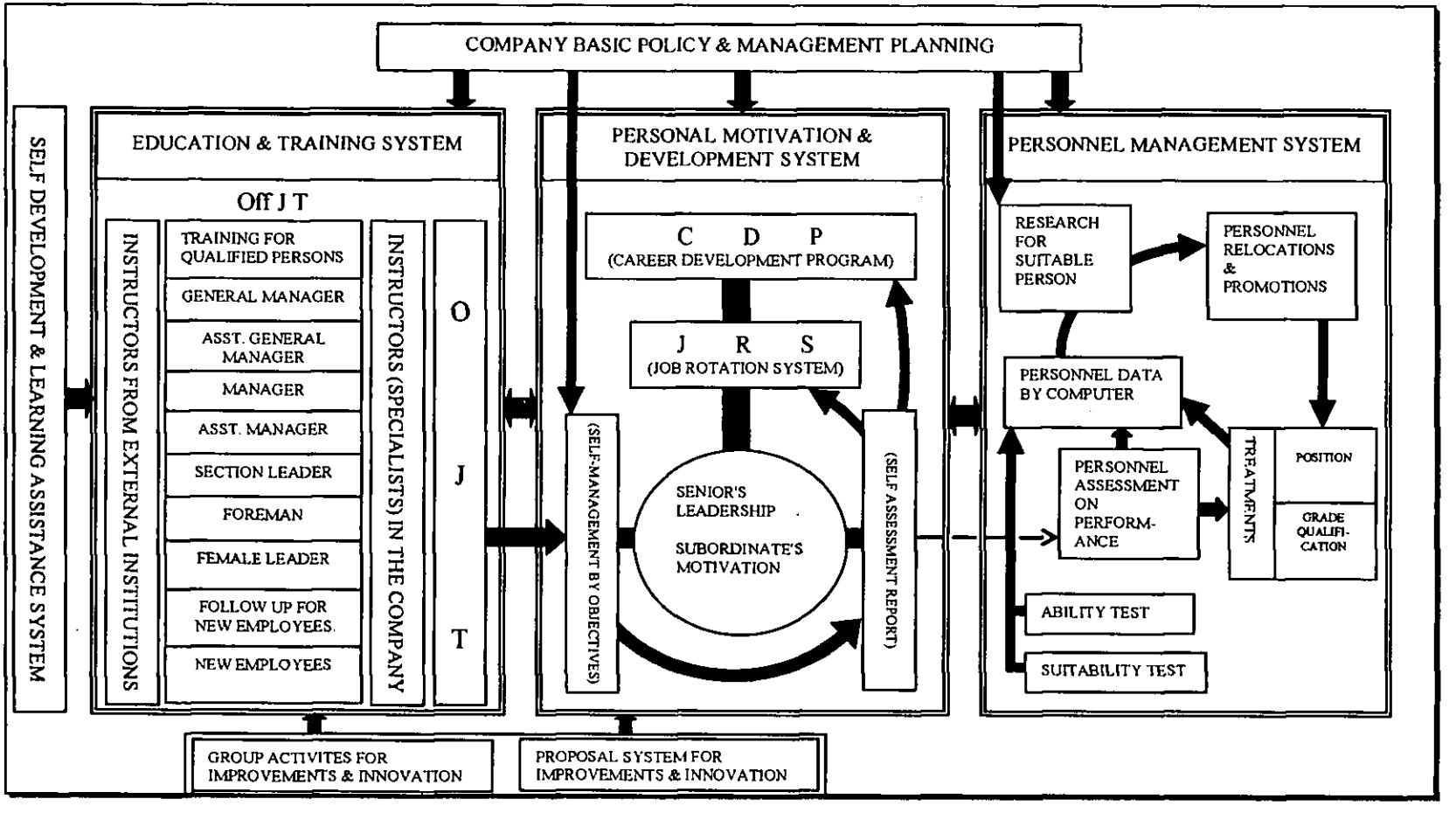


Figure A.10 <u>Comprehensive Human Resources Development System</u> (Major Multinational Japanese Corporation)

It seems that the whole process can be best described as an active partnership between the company and the individuals in developing talent. Such an expectation is reinforced by corporate and Off-the-Job Training programmes through the company's own facilities or public vocational training centres (Lorriman & Kenjo, 1996). It is an on-going, continual process at all levels of the organisation. First-line managers are both a product and an instrument of that process.

In Summary

Under the Japanese management system, the role of first-line managers is an integral part in developing the sense of identity for each employee. Are such practices paying off in light of the success manifested in such industries as the automobiles, electronics, cameras and copiers? According to Lopez (2000), "The world beating portion of the Japanese economy – autos, steel, machine tools and consumer electronics – is thriving, bettering any and all competitors' productivity by 20 percent". The dominant position attained by Japanese corporations that subscribe to such practices, many anecdotal in nature, is hard to refute.

APPENDIX B

THE USA CONNECTION

So, there is nothing new under the sun. (Ecc.I:9)
There is no remembrance of earlier things;
And also of the later things which will occur,
There will be for them no remembrance
Among those who come later. (Ecc.I:11)

In tracing the evolution of the Japanese management practices, Robinson & Stern (1995) established the roots of these practices with the occupation of Japan after World War II. Initially, three different training courses were independently put into effect, the contents of which were remarkably well aligned: the Management Training Programme (MTP) for middle managers, the Civil Communications Section (CCS) seminars for top management and three Training Within Industry (TWI) "J" programmes for lower-level supervisors; the latter had already been used extensively in the United States to boost national production and productivity during the war as propounded by Robinson & Stern (1995). To further illustrate the impact of these training programmes, he quotes Noda (1969), a prominent business scholar in the two decades after the war, describing how MTP, CCS and TWI "by consistent adherence to the management cycle of planning-doing-seeing, succeeded in implanting the principles of modern management far and wide among Japanese industry." The implication of such origin is that both the USA and Japan had access to the same fundamental management precepts.

The three-pronged approach, which targets first-line, middle and top management even though fortuitous in its origin, assures a consistent management outlook and corporate

values. The resulting common understanding of management – and the common language used to describe its practices – has provided well-developed paths for information flow in Japanese organisations (Robinson & Schroeder, 1993). This integrative benefit cannot be minimised.

Because the USA's Far East Air Force Material Command (FEAMCOM) decided that, in order to improve productivity, it needed to provide training for its Japanese workforce "MTP taught a significant percentage of several generations of Japanese managers three things: first, the importance of human relations and employee involvement, second, the methodology and value of continuously improving processes and products, and third, the usefulness of a scientific and rational 'plan-do-see' approach to managing people and operations" (Robinson & Stern, 1995). The similarity in values with the TWI programme assured consistency of purpose.

Of particular interest is the training of supervisors through TWI which actually started in Great Britain at the peak of the war in 1944. It explained that supervisors have five basic needs: knowledge of work, knowledge of responsibilities, skills in instructing, skills in improving methods, and skills in leading. TWI provided three standardised training programmes for supervisors and foremen. The first, Job Instructional Training (JIT) taught supervisors the importance of proper training of workforce and how to provide it. The second, Job Methods Training (JMT), focused on how to generate and implement ideas for methods improvement. The third, Job Relations Training (JRT), related to a course in supervisor-worker relationship and leadership. The TWI programmes are distinctive, not because of the accepted principles of good management that they cover, but because they are successful in getting these used (Robinson & Schroeder, 1993).

The centrality of implementation is key in this study as the issue is not what constitutes good management or, specifically, goals in the academic/professional circles, but the actual thinking at the first-line management level.

While these techniques have evolved over the past forty years, the endurance of such practices has provided certain benefits. "It is distinctive because it is an example of a successful long term HRD (Human Resources Development) initiative implemented on a national scale" (Robinson & Stern, 1995). The list of companies which adopted and adapted such training reads like a who's who in corporate Japan: Toyota, Nissan, Olympus, Canon, Hitachi, Japan Airlines, etc., as stipulated by Robinson & Stern (1995). He believes that successful completion of the course has become a requirement for promotion into middle management at many large companies.

The practices' universal acceptance was not limited to the dissemination which occurred during the occupation of Japan: the emphasis continued through the involvement and support of governmental and national organisations. The Japan Industrial Training Association and various other professional organisations conducted these training programmes; Japan's Ministry of International Trade and Industry (MITI) and the Japan Federation of Employers' Association (Nikkeiren) have jointly overseen the course for fifty years. Many leading Japanese companies internalised them to meet their own requirements to train supervisors (Imai, 1997). The combination of OJT and Off-the-Job Training, as stressed by Lorriman & Kenjo (1996), enables employees to acquire the skills and techniques needed to do their jobs.

As stated by Robinson & Stern (1995) "Associated with this common training platform is what we term the *rolling-cascading* training model. Senior managers who took the training when they were younger teach the course to middle managers, who, as they rise in the hierarchy, in turn teach it to their juniors, and so on." They affirm that the course made Japanese managers reflect profoundly on their underlying managerial values. Not only does the *rolling-cascading* effect provide a uniformity in values and decision making processes, as the converse is also true. Each manager, having proceeded through the corporate ranks, knows exactly what each subordinate has to master in order to become an effective leader and to mentor subordinates.

For more than forty years, this training philosophy has been at the core of Japan's national effort to achieve the long-term mission of disseminating sound management principles throughout industry. According to Robinson & Stern (1995), it has given Japanese managers a common set of values and vocabulary with which to communicate. However, the extent of training, other than to acknowledge its widespread use, is difficult to measure. "Even approximate figures for the total number of Japanese supervisors who have received TWI training are difficult to obtain, because of the extent to which the programmes are diffused throughout Japanese government and industry" (Robinson & Schroeder, 1993).

The historical review is important to this research for several reasons:

(1) it demonstrates the universality of the management concepts which, more recently, have been attributed to Japan;

(2) it explains the consistency within companies and industries;

(3) because of the mode of implementation, it indoctrinates all levels of

management, as well as new employees, in using the same set of values, management practices and communication concepts;

(4) it exposes all employees to the concepts on a continual basis, starting with new employees' daily orientation and yearly refresher courses.

While the TWI fundamental concepts had their greatest effect on Japan, embracing the "J" programmes more wholeheartedly than any other nation, they were also implemented in Europe, New Zealand, Korea, Indonesia, Mexico, Turkey and Nepal, as reported by Robinson & Stern (1995) demonstrating its portability. While there are improvements at each iteration, the role of first-line managers remains key and their interaction with subordinates makes their importance even more considerable.

APPENDIX C

JAPANESE GLOSSARY OF TERMS

Andon: Means of visual communications on the status of equipment and production.

Bu: Division or department.

Bucho: Division or department head, the lowest-level manager with profit-and-loss responsibilities in most organisations.

Bushido: Value of self-sacrifice, rectitude, courage, spirit of daring, benevolence, politeness, veracity, sincerity, honour, loyalty, and self-control (Lorriman, 1994).

Dantotsu: Striving to be the best of the best.

Doki: Year group, which starts out as a cohort of new recruits.

Genba: Floor, workplace where goods are produced.

Giri: Debt, obligation respect.

Gotyo: Lead person.

Hancho: Foreman.

Handan Suruna: To decide—don't. Meaning removing decision making from the actual production mode. Changes should be made through design and organisation.

Hastu Syussya: 1st day of entering (joining) the company.

Honbucho: Bucho at headquarters.

Hoshin Kanri: Policy development which means the breaking down and translating major corporate and divisional goals into specific operational goals for lower level units.

Ippanshain: General employee.

Jicho: Deputy departmental head.

Jinzai: Men of talent

Jinzai Keiei: High potential individuals management.

Ka: Section in an organisation.

Kacho: Lowest-level manager who actually supervises employees.

Kairan: Document circulated for informational purposes.

Kaisha: Japanese corporations.

Kaishain: Company members.

Kaizen: Process of continuous improvement.

Kaseka: Good team-work, activate the department.

Keidanren: Trade association of Japan's largest and most prestigious enterprises.

Keiei: Management.

Keiei Gaku: Management study.

Keiei Shoku: Board members.

Kenshu: Sharpen, training, learn

Kenshu kikan: Training period to learn skills including orientation.

Kikan: Period

Kohai: Junior person under the tutelage of a senior (senpai).

Kokoro gamae: Heart preparation. One's mental (heart) attitude.

Karoshi: Death due to overwork, long hours.

Madogiwazoku: Window sitter manager who has been marginalized with little or no responsibility.

Muda: Waste, non-value added activities.

Narugakae: The total man concept including the emotional participation in the group.

Nemawahi: Informal discussion process intended to prepare the ground for a proposal or opinion-seeking at all levels.

Nenko: Seniority-based pay system.

Nenpo sei: Annual salary system.

Nikkeiren: Japanese Federation of Employers' Association.

Noryoku kyu: Pay largely determined by an employee's ability (many times measured by years of experience).

Nyusya Shiki: Ceremony entering company.

Riiga: Leader

Ringi: Consultation process.

Ringi-seido: Process of circulating ideas and plans to reach consensus.

Ringi-sho: Written proposal circulated to all affected for review and approval.

Sanka Ishiki: Feeling of participation.

Senpai: Person of seniority mentoring and supervising the work of a junior person. (Kohai).

Setai: Time of fellowship, after work.

Shain: Entertainment of subordinates.

Shokuba: Workshop, place of work.

Shokuba senpai: Office senior.

Shokuno: Basic and general ability to work.

Shokuruu: Position, job

Shonin: Non-titled employee, general worker.

Shukan: Make it so, make it a habit. (Could be considered the 6^{th} or the 5'S).

Shushin koyo: Life-time employment.

Soto: Outsider (people outside of the organisation or group).

Tanshin-Funin: Job rotation, every three to five years.

Tatemae: What one is supposed to do.

Torishimariyaku: Director

Uchi: Inner circle (individuals or employees considered to "belong", to be part of the group).

Wa: Harmony, lack of friction or conflict between individual or groups.

APPENDIX D

JAPANESE ORGANISATIONS VISITED

This is a list of Corporations and Universities whose personnel were visited in Japan in the summers of 1995, 1997, 1998 and 1999.

Corporations
Aisan Industry Co., Ltd.
Asahi Glass Co. Ltd.
Asian Productivity Organisation (APO)
ATR International Japan
Auto Business Inc.
Bishu
Boeing/Mitsubishi Heavy Industries
Chunichi Newspapers
Densho Engineering Co. Ltd
Excel Co. Ltd.
Excel International
Global Staff Co.
Globis Corp
JCIE
Kaizen Consulting Group
Kinshi Masamune Corporation
Kimura Unity Co.
Kitagawa Industries Co. Ltd.
KPC Consultants
Kuni Research International Corp.
Kuraray Co. Ltd.
Kyocera Communication Systems Co. Ltd.
Management Systems Technology, Inc.
Mitsubishi Electric Corporation
Mitsubishi Ltd.
Nidec
Nintendo Co. Ltd.
Nippon Denso
Nissan Motors Manufacturing
Noritake
NSC
Onodera
PSI Co. Ltd.
Ricoh
Shinto Adhesives
SP Tyres/Dunlop
Sumitomo 3M Ltd.
Sumitomo Rubber Industries
Sunny Corp. Ltd.
Suzuka Fuji Xerox
The Yasuda Fire & Marine Ins. Co. Ltd.
Tokiwa Co. Ltd.
Toyoda Gosei Co., Ltd.
Toyota Auto
Toyota Motor Corporation
Toyota Motor Manufacturing, USA
Toyota Tsusho Corp.
Yuasa Battery Ltd.

Universities
Adachi Educational Institution
Aichi Institute of Technology
Aichi University
Chukyo Gakuin University
Chukyo University
Hannan University
Hitotubashi University Tokyo Japan
Kobe University
Kyoto International University
Meijo University
Nagoya Institute of Technology
Nagoya University
Nanzan University
Polytechnic University of Japan
Tokyo Denki University
Yokohama National University
UMDS University

APPENDIX E

AUDIT LETTERS

In order to ascertain the accuracy of the coding, several individuals were gracious to conduct the audit of the tabulation of the data. The first two letters are from individuals who verified the translation and coding of the Japanese data. The third letter from Dr. Adjibolosoo is the verification of the coding of the Canadian data.

Gemba Research

Brad Schmidt
#312-11240 Daniels Road,
Richmond, BC V6X 1M6
Canada

February 11, 1999

To whom it may concern,

As a consultant in Lean Manufacturing and an interpreter for Japanese Lean Manufacturing consultants, I have viewed the Japanese content of this paper and its supporting documents and hereby testify that the translations used in this paper are an accurate reflection of the Japanese words and their meanings in their given contexts.

Sincerely,

Brad Schmidt
Principal & Interpreter

KIU Kyoto International University

1-1 Ichinotsubo Kusauchi Kyotanabe
Kyoto 610-0311 JAPAN
〒610-0311 京田辺市草内一ノ坪1-1
Tel:0774-64-0804/Fax:0774-64-0805
e-mail: kiu@mahoroba.or.jp

I verified the translation and coding.

I agree with the translations and coding with very minor clarifications.

Kyoto International University
Official interpreter

細木麻子 (細木)
Mako Hosoki

Address:

874-5-103, Tsuji Machi
Ikoma City, Nara
Japan 630-0212

POINT LOMA NAZARENE UNIVERSITY

Department
of Accountancy,
Business and
Economics

July 25, 2000

To Whom It May Concern:

At the request of Michel Mesire, I have coded a sample of 40 responses for two questions (question #2 and #8). A list of forty random numbers was generated from a package available on the Internet. From the definitions given, coding a few sample questions was first performed to ascertain my understanding of the definitions. For each question, a total of forty sample responses were then coded. All but one response were the same as my own coding. This difference was an omission rather than a totally different coding error.

Yours sincerely,

ABK Ghmy

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